POEMS OF PLACES

EDITED BY
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

ITALY

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Poems of Places.

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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK

POEMS OF PLACES

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HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

It is the Soul that sees; the outward eyes
Present the object, but the Mind descries
CRABBE

ITALY

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By HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

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ITALY.

Sanguinetto.

"THERE are two little rivulets which run from the Gualandro into the lake. The traveller crosses the first of these at about a mile after he comes into the plain, and this divides the Tuscan from the Papal territories. The second, about a quarter of a mile farther on, is called 'the bloody rivulet'; and the peasants point out an open spot to the left between the 'Sanguinetto' and the hills, which, they say, was the principal scene of slaughter." — *Hobhouse's Notes to Childe Harold.*

BROOK OF SANGUINETTO.

WE win where least we care to strive,
And where the most we strive we miss.
Old Hannibal, if now alive,
Might sadly testify to this.
He lost the Rome for which he came;
And — what he never had *in petto* —
Won for this little brook a name, —
Its mournful name of Sanguinetto.

John Kenyon.

Sapri.

THE GLEANER OF SAPRI.

THEY were three hundred, they were young and strong,
And they are dead!
One morning, as I went to glean the grain,
I saw a bark in middle of the main;
It was a bark came steaming to the shore,
And hoisted for its flag the tricolor.
At Ponza's isle it stopped beneath the lea;
It stayed awhile, and then put out to sea, —
Put out to sea, and came unto our strand;
Landed with arms, but not as foemen land.
They were three hundred, they were young and strong,
And they are dead!

Landed with arms, but not as foemen land,
For they stooped down and kissed the very sand.
And one by one I looked them in the face;
A tear and smile in each one I could trace!
"Thieves from their dens are these," some people said,
And yet they took not even a loaf of bread!
I heard them utter but a single cry:
"We for our native land have come to die!"
They were three hundred, they were young and strong,
And they are dead!

With eyes of azure, and with hair of gold,
A young man marched in front of them; and bold

I made myself, and, having seized his hand,
Asked him, "Where goest, fair captain of the band?"
He looked at me and answered, "Sister mine,
I go to die for this fair land of thine!"
I felt my heart was trembling through and through,
Nor could I say to him, "God comfort you!"
They were three hundred, they were young and strong,
And they are dead!

That morning I forgot to glean the grain,
And set myself to follow in their train.
Twice over they encountered the gens-d'armes,
Twice over they despoiled them of their arms;
But when we came before Certosa's wall
We heard the drums beat and the trumpets call,
And mid the smoke, the firing, and the glare
More than a thousand fell upon them there.
They were three hundred, they were young and strong,
And they are dead!

They were three hundred, and they would not fly;
They seemed three thousand, and they wished to die,
But wished to die with weapons in their hands;
Before them ran with blood the meadow-lands.
I prayed for them, but ere the fight was o'er
Swooned suddenly away, and looked no more;
For in their midst I could no more behold
Those eyes of azure and that hair of gold!
They were three hundred, they were young and strong,
And they are dead!

Luigi Mercantini. Tr. Anon.

Savona.

VESPERS ON THE SHORE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

At Savona, a very ancient little city on the coast of Genoa, there stands by the lighthouse a Madonna about twelve feet high, under which are inscribed two Sapphic verses, which are both good Latin and choice Italian, — made by Gabriello Chiabrera, "the prince of Italian lyric poets," who was a native of Savona, —

In mare irato, in subita procella,
Invoco te, nostra benigna stella."

RELIGION'S purest presence was not found,
By the first followers of our Saviour's creed,
In stately fanes where trump and timbrel sound
Sent up the chorus in a strain agreed,
And where the decked oblation's wail might plead
For guilty man with Abraham's holy seed.

Not in vast domes, — horizons hung by men,
Where golden panels fret a marble sky,
And things below look up, and wonder when
Those lifelike seraphim would start and fly!
Not where the heart is mastered by the eye
Will worship, anthem-winged, ascend most high.

But in the damp cathedral of the grove,
Where nature feels the sanctitude of rest,
Or in the stillness of the sheltered cove
Which noiseless waterfowl alone molest,
At times a reverence will pervade the breast
Which will not always come, a bidden guest.

Oft as the parting smiles of day and night
Flush earth and ocean with a roseate hue,
And the quick changes of the magic light
Prolong the glory of their warm adieu,
Each pilgrim on the hills, and every crew
On the lulled waters, frame their vows anew.

Then by the waves that lip Liguria's land,
In Genoa's gulf, thou, wanderer! must have heard
What, more than hymns from Pergolesi's hand,
The living soul of adoration stirred, —
And, like the note of Spring's first-welcomed bird,
Some thoughts awake for which there is no word.

The shipman's chant! as noting travellers tell,
In either language — old and new —the same;
But more they might have truly said, and well,
For 't is a speech the universe may claim;
Men of all times, all climes, and every name,
Devotion's tongue! which from the Godhead came.

HYMN.

Tost rudderless around the deep
By Apennine and Alpine blast,
Which o'er the surge in fury sweep,
And make a bulrush of our mast,
We murmur in our half-hour's sleep
To thee, Madonna! till the storm be past,
In mare irato, in subita procella,
Invoco te, nostra benigna stella.

Whether for weeks our bark hath striven
With death in wild Sardinia's waves,
Or downward far as Tunis driven,
Threat us with life, — the life of slaves;
We know whose hand its help has given,
And locked the lightning in its thunder caves.
In mare irato, in subita procella,
Invoco te, nostra benigna stella.

O Virgin! when the landsman's hymn,
At vesper time, on bended knee,
In sunlit aisle, or chapel dim,
Or cloister cell, is paid to thee,
Hear us that ocean's pavement skim,
And join our anthem to the raging sea:
In mare irato, in subita procella,
Invoco te, nostra benigna stella.

And when the tempest's wrath is o'er,
And tired Libeccio sinks to rest,
And starlight falls upon the shore
Where love sits watching, uncaressed,
Though hushed the tumult and the roar,
Again the prayer we 'll chant which thou hast blest:
In mare irato, in subita procella,
Invoco te, nostra benigna stella.

Thomas William Parsons.

Scylla and Charybdis, the Rocks.

SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS.

THERE is a pile
Of beetling rocks, where roars the mighty surge
Of dark-eyed Amphitrité; these are called
The Wanderers by the blessed gods. No birds
Can pass them safe, not even the timid doves,
Which bear ambrosia to our father Jove,
But ever doth the slippery rock take off
Some one, whose loss the god at once supplies,
To keep their number full. To these no bark
Guided by man has ever come, and left
The spot unwrecked; the billows of the deep
And storms of fire in air have scattered wide
Timbers of ships and bodies of drowned men.
One only of the barks that plough the deep
Has passed them safely, — Argo, known to all
By fame, when coming from Ææta home, —
And her the billows would have dashed against
The enormous rocks, if Juno, for the sake
Of Jason, had not come to guide it through.
"Two are the rocks; one lifts to the broad heaven
Its pointed summit, where a dark gray cloud
Broods, and withdraws not; never is the sky
Clear o'er that peak, not even in summer days
Or autumn; nor can man ascend its steeps,
Or venture down, — so smooth the sides, as if
Man's art had polished them. There in the midst

Upon the western side toward Erebus
There yawns a shadowy cavern; thither thou,
Noble Ulysses, steer thy bark, yet keep
So far aloof that, standing on the deck,
A youth might send an arrow from a bow
Just to the cavern's mouth. There Scylla dwells,
And fills the air with fearful yells; her voice
The cry of whelps just littered, but herself
A frightful prodigy, — a sight which none
Would care to look on, though he were a god.
Twelve feet are hers, all shapeless; six long necks,
A hideous head on each, and triple rows
Of teeth, close-set and many, threatening death.
And half her form is in the cavern's womb,
And forth from that dark gulf her heads are thrust,
To look abroad upon the rocks for prey, —
Dolphin, or dogfish, or the mightier whale,
Such as the murmuring Amphitrité breeds
In multitudes. No mariner can boast
That he has passed by Scylla with a crew
Unharmed; she snatches from the deck, and bears
Away in each grim mouth, a living man.

"Another rock, Ulysses, thou wilt see,
Of lower height, so near her that a spear,
Cast by the hand, might reach it. On it grows
A huge wild fig-tree with luxuriant leaves.
Below, Charybdis, of immortal birth,
Draws the dark water down; for thrice a day
She gives it forth, and thrice with fearful whirl
She draws it in. O, be it not thy lot
To come while the dark water rushes down!

Even Neptune could not then deliver thee.
Then turn thy course with speed toward Scylla's rock,
And pass that way; 't were better far that six
Should perish from the ship than all be lost."

Homer. Tr. W. C. Bryant.

SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS.

But when near the coasts
Of Sicily, Pelorus' narrow straits
Open to view, then take the land to the left,
And the left sea, with a wide circuit round,
And shun the shore and sea upon the right.
Those lands, 't is said, by vast convulsions once
Were torn asunder (such the changes wrought
By time), when both united stood as one.
Between them rushed the sea, and with its waves
Cut off the Italian side from Sicily,
And now between their fields and cities flows
With narrow tide. There Scylla guards the right,
Charybdis the implacable the left;
And thrice its whirlpool sucks the vast waves down
Into the lowest depths of its abyss,
And spouts them forth into the air again,
Lashing the stars with waves. But Scylla lurks
Within the blind recesses of a cave,
Stretching her open jaws, and dragging down
The ships upon the rocks. Foremost, a face,
Human, with comely virgin's breast, she seems,
E'en to the middle; but her lower parts
A hideous monster of the sea, the tails

Of dolphins mingling with the womb of wolves.
Better to voyage, though delaying long,
Around Pachyna's cape, with circuit wide,
Than once the shapeless Scylla to behold
Under her caverns vast, and hear those rocks
Resounding with her dark blue ocean hounds.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

THE DIVER.

"BARON or vassal, is any so bold
As to plunge in yon gulf and follow
Through chamber and cave this beaker of gold,
Which already the waters whirlingly swallow?
Who retrieves the prize from the horrid abyss
Shall keep it: the gold and the glory be his!"

So spake the King, and incontinent flung
From the cliff that, gigantic and steep,
High over Charybdis's whirlpool hung,
A glittering winecup down in the deep;
And again he asked, "Is there one so brave
As to plunge for the gold in the dangerous wave?"

And the knights and the knaves all answerless hear
The challenging words of the speaker;
And some glance downwards with looks of fear,
And none are ambitious of winning the beaker.
And a third time the King his question urges,—
"Dares none, then, breast the menacing surges?"

But the silence lasts unbroken and long;
When a Page, fair-featured and soft,
Steps forth from the shuddering vassal-throng,
And his mantle and girdle already are doffed,
And the groups of nobles and damosels nigh,
Envisage the youth with a wondering eye.

He dreadlessly moves to the gaunt crag's brow,
And measures the drear depth under;
But the waters Charybdis had swallowed she now
Regurgitates bellowing back in thunder,
And the foam, with a stunning and horrible sound,
Breaks its hoar way through the waves around.

And it seethes and roars, it welters and boils,
As when water is showered upon fire;
And skyward the spray agonizingly toils,
And flood over flood sweeps higher and higher,
Upheaving, downrolling, tumultuously,
As though the abyss would bring forth a young sea.

But the terrible turmoil at last is over;
And down through the whirlpool's well
A yawning blackness ye may discover,
Profound as the passage to central Hell;
And the waves, under many a struggle and spasm,
Are sucked in afresh by the gorge of the chasm.

And now, ere the din re-thunders, the youth
Invokes the great name of God;
And blended shrieks of horror and ruth
Burst forth as he plunges headlong unawed:

And down he descends through the watery bed,
And the waves boom over his sinking head.

But though for a while they have ceased their swell,
  They roar in the hollows beneath,
And from mouth to mouth goes round the farewell, —
  "Brave-spirited youth, good night in death!"
And louder and louder the roarings grow,
While with trembling all eyes are directed below.

Now, wert thou even, O monarch! to fling
  Thy crown in the angry abyss,
And exclaim, "Who recovers the crown shall be king!"
  The guerdon were powerless to tempt me, I wis;
For what in Charybdis's caverns dwells
No chronicle penned of mortal tells.

Full many a vessel beyond repeal
  Lies low in that gulf to-day,
And the shattered masts and the drifting keel
  Alone tell the tale of the swooper's prey.
But hark! — with a noise like the howling of storms,
Again the wild water the surface deforms!

And it hisses and rages, it welters and boils,
  As when water is spurted on fire,
And skyward the spray agonizingly toils,
  And wave over wave beats higher and higher,
While the foam, with a stunning and horrible sound,
Breaks its white way through the waters around.

When lo! ere as yet the billowy war
  Loud raging beneath is o'er,

An arm and a neck are distinguished afar,
And a swimmer is seen to make for the shore,
And hardily buffeting surge and breaker,
He springs upon land with the golden beaker.

And lengthened and deep is the breath he draws
As he hails the bright face of the sun;
And a murmur goes round of delight and applause, —
He lives! — he is safe! — he has conquered and won!
He has mastered Charybdis's perilous wave!
He has rescued his life and his prize from the grave!

Now, bearing the booty triumphantly,
At the foot of the throne he falls,
And he proffers his trophy on bended knee;
And the King to his beautiful daughter calls,
Who fills with red wine the golden cup,
While the gallant stripling again stands up.

"All hail to the King! Rejoice, ye who breathe
Wheresoever Earth's gales are driven!
For ghastly and drear is the region beneath;
And let man beware how he tempts high Heaven!
Let him never essay to uncurtain to light
What destiny shrouds in horror and night!

"The maelstrom dragged me down in its course;
When, forth from the cleft of a rock,
A torrent outrushed with tremendous force,
And met me anew with deadening shock;
And I felt my brain swim and my senses reel
As the double-flood whirled me round like a wheel.

"But the God I had cried to answered me
When my destiny darkliest frowned,
And he showed me a reef of rocks in the sea,
Whereunto I clung, and there I found
On a coral jag the goblet of gold,
Which else to the lowermost crypt had rolled.

"And the gloom through measureless toises under
Was all as a purple haze;
And though sound was none in these realms of wonder,
I shuddered when under my shrinking gaze
That wilderness lay developed where wander
The dragon and dog-fish and sea-salamander.

"And I saw the huge kraken and magnified snake
And the thornback and ravening shark
Their way through the dismal waters take,
While the hammer-fish wallowed below in the dark,
And the river-horse rose from his lair beneath,
And grinned through the grate of his spiky teeth.

"And there I hung, aghast and dismayed,
Among skeleton larvæ, the only
Soul conscious of life — despairing of aid
In that vastness untrodden and lonely.
Not a human voice, — not an earthly sound, —
But silence, and water, and monsters around.

"Soon one of these monsters approached me, and plied
His hundred feelers to drag
Me down through the darkness; when, springing aside,
I abandoned my hold of the coral crag,

And the maelstrom grasped me with arms of strength,
And upwhirled and upbore me to daylight at length."

Then spake to the Page the marvelling King,
"The golden cup is thine own,
But — I promise thee further this jewelled ring
That beams with a priceless hyacinth-stone,
Shouldst thou dive once more and discover for me
The mysteries shrined in the cells of the sea."

Now the King's fair daughter was touched and grieved,
And she fell at her father's feet, —
"O father, enough what the youth has achieved!
Expose not his life anew, I entreat!
If this your heart's longing you cannot well tame,
There are surely knights here who will rival his fame."

But the King hurled downwards the golden cup,
And he spake, as it sank in the wave,
"Now, shouldst thou a second time bring it me up,
As my knight, and the bravest of all my brave,
Thou shalt sit at my nuptial banquet, and she
Who pleads for thee thus thy wedded shall be!"

Then the blood to the youth's hot temples rushes,
And his eyes on the maiden are cast,
And he sees her at first overspread with blushes,
And then growing pale and sinking aghast.
So, vowing to win so glorious a crown,
For Life or for Death he again plunges down.

The far-sounding din returns amain,
And the foam is alive as before,

And all eyes are bent downward. In vain, in vain, —
The billows indeed re-dash and re-roar.
But while ages shall roll and those billows shall thunder,
That youth shall sleep under!

Friedrich Schiller. Tr. J. C. Mangan.

Scylla, the Town.

DESTRUCTION OF SCYLLA IN 1783.

CALMLY the night came down
O'er Scylla's shattered walls;
How desolate that silent town!
How tenantless the halls
Where yesterday her thousands trode,
And princes graced their proud abode!

Low, on the wet sea-sand,
Humbled in anguish now,
The despot, midst his menial band,
Bent down his kingly brow, —
Ay, prince and peasant knelt in prayer,
For grief had made them equal there.

Again! — as at the morn,
The earthquake rolled its car;
Lowly the castle-towers were borne,
That mocked the storms of war.
The mountain reeled, — its shivered brow
Went down among the waves below.

Up rose the kneelers then,
As the wave's rush was heard;
The silence of those fated men
Was broken by no word.
But closer still the mother pressed
The infant to her faithful breast.

One long wild shriek went up,
Full mighty in despair,
As bowed to drink death's bitter cup
The thousands gathered there;
And man's strong wail and woman's cry
Blent as the waters hurried by.

On swept the whelming sea;
The mountains felt its shock,
As the long cry of agony
Thrilled through their towers of rock;
And echo round that fatal shore
The death-wail of the sufferers bore.

The morning sun shed forth
Its light upon the scene,
Where tower and palace strewed the earth
With wrecks of what had been;
But of the thousands who were gone,
No trace was left, no vestige shown.

Anonymous.

Serchio, the River.

THE BOAT.

OUR boat is asleep on Serchio's stream,
Its sails are folded like thoughts in a dream,
The helm sways idly hither and thither.
Dominic, the boatman, has brought the mast
And the oars and the sails; but 't is sleeping fast,
Like a beast, unconscious of its tether.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue air,
And the thin white moon lay withering there;
To tower and cavern and rift and tree
The owl and the bat fled drowsily.
Day had kindled the dewy woods,
And the rocks above and the stream below,
And the vapors in their multitudes,
And the Apennines' shroud of summer snow,
And clothed with light of airy gold
The mists in their eastern caves uprolled.

Day had awakened all things that be, —
The lark and the thrush and the swallow free,
And the milkmaid's song and mower's scythe,
And the matin-bell and the mountain bee.
Fireflies were quenched on the dewy corn;
Glow-worms went out on the river's brim,
Like lamps which a student forgets to trim;

The beetle forgot to wind his horn;
The crickets were still in the meadow and hill;
Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's gun,
Night's dreams and terrors, every one,
Fled from the brains which are their prey
From the lamp's death to the morning ray.

All rose to do the task He set to each,
Who shaped us to his ends and not our own;
The million rose to learn, and one to teach
What none yet ever knew or can be known.

And many rose
Whose woe was such that fear became desire;—
Melchior and Lionel were not among those;
They from the throng of men had stepped aside,
And made their home under the green hillside.
It was that hill whose intervening brow
Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious eye,
Which the circumfluous plain waving below,
Like a wide lake of green fertility,
With streams and fields and marshes bare
Divides from the far Apennines, which lie
Islanded in the immeasurable air.

"What think you, as she lies in her green cove,
Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of?
If morning dreams are true, why I should guess
That she was dreaming of our idleness,
And of the miles of watery way
We should have led her by this time of day."

"Never mind," said Lionel,
"Give care to the winds, they can bear it well
About yon poplar tops; and see!
The white clouds are driving merrily,
And the stars we miss this morn will light
More willingly our return to-night.
List, my dear fellow, the breeze blows fair;
How it scatters Dominic's long black hair!
Singing of us, and our lazy motions,
If I can guess a boat's emotions."

The chain is loosed, the sails are spread,
The living breath is fresh behind,
As, with dews and sunrise fed,
Comes the laughing morning wind.
The sails are full, the boat makes head
Against the Serchio's torrent fierce,
Then flags with intermitting course,
And hangs upon the wave,
Which fervid from its mountain source
Shallow, smooth, and strong, doth come;
Swift as fire, tempestuously
It sweeps into the affrighted sea;
In morning's smile its eddies coil,
Its billows sparkle, toss, and boil,
Torturing all its quiet light
Into columns fierce and bright.

The Serchio, twisting forth
Between the marble barriers which it clove
At Ripafratta, leads through the dread chasm

The wave that died the death which lovers love,
Living in what it sought; as if this spasm
Had not yet past, the toppling mountains cling,
But the clear stream in full enthusiasm
Pours itself on the plain, until wandering,
Down one clear path of effluence crystalline
Sends its clear waves, that they may fling
At Arno's feet tribute of corn and wine;
Then, through the pestilential deserts wild
Of tangled marsh and woods of stunted fir,
It rushes to the ocean.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Sermione (Sirmio).

SIRMIO; LAGO DI GARDA.

SWEET Sirmio! thou, the very eye
Of all peninsulas and isles,
That in our lakes of silver lie,
Or sleep, enwreathed by Neptune's smiles, —

How gladly back to thee I fly!
Still doubting, asking, — can it be
That I have left Bithynia's sky,
And gaze in safety upon thee?

O, what is happier than to find
Our hearts at ease, our perils past;

When, anxious long, the lightened mind
  Lays down its load of care at last;

When, tired with toil o'er land and deep,
  Again we tread the welcome floor
Of our own home, and sink to sleep
  On the long-wished-for bed once more.

This, this it is, that pays alone
  The ills of all life's former track.
Shine out, my beautiful, my own
  Sweet Sirmio! greet thy master back.

And thou, fair lake, whose water quaffs
  The light of heaven like Lydia's sea,
Rejoice, rejoice, — let all that laughs
  Abroad, at home, laugh out for me.

Catullus. Tr. Thomas Moore.

Sicily.

SICILY.

ALAS for Sicily! rude fragments now
  Lie scattered, where the shapely column stood.
Her palaces are dust. In all her streets
The voice of singing and the sprightly chord
Are silent. Revelry and dance and show
Suffer a syncope and a solemn pause,

While God performs upon the trembling stage
Of his own works his dreadful part alone.
How does the earth receive him? — with what signs
Of gratulation and delight her king?
Pours she not all her choicest fruits abroad,
Her sweetest flowers, her aromatic gums,
Disclosing Paradise where'er he treads?
She quakes at his approach. Her hollow womb,
Conceiving thunders through a thousand deeps
And fiery caverns, roars beneath his foot.
The hills move lightly, and the mountains smoke,
For he has touched them. From the extremest point
Of elevation down into the abyss
His wrath is busy, and his frown is felt.
The rocks fall headlong, and the valleys rise,
The rivers die into offensive pools,
And charged with putrid verdure, breathe a gross
And mortal nuisance into all the air.
What solid was, by transformation strange,
Grows fluid; and the fixed and rooted earth,
Tormented into billows, heaves and swells,
Or with vortiginous and hideous whirl
Sucks down its prey insatiable. Immense
The tumult and the overthrow, the pangs
And agonies of human and of brute
Multitudes, fugitive on every side,
And fugitive in vain. The sylvan scene
Migrates uplifted; and, with all its soil
Alighting in far distant fields, finds out
A new possessor, and survives the change.
Ocean has caught the frenzy, and, upwrought

To an enormous and o'erbearing height,
Not by a mighty wind, but by that voice
Which winds and waves obey, invades the shore
Resistless. Never such a sudden flood,
Upridged so high, and sent on such a charge,
Possessed an inland scene. Where now the throng
That pressed the beach, and, hasty to depart,
Looked to the sea for safety? They are gone,
Gone with the refluent wave into the deep,—
A prince with half his people! Ancient towers,
And roofs embattled high, the gloomy scenes,
Where beauty oft and lettered worth consume
Life in the unproductive shades of death,
Fall prone: the pale inhabitants come forth,
And, happy in their unforeseen release
From all the rigors of restraint, enjoy
The terrors of the day, that sets them free.
Who, then, that has thee would not hold thee fast,
Freedom? whom they that lose thee so regret,
That e'en a judgment, making way for thee,
Seems in their eyes a mercy for thy sake.

William Cowper.

ODE TO SICILY.

NO mortal hand hath struck the heroic string
Since Milton's lay in death across his breast,
But shall the lyre then rest
Along tired Cupid's wing
With vilest dust upon it? This of late
Hath been its fate.

But thou, O Sicily, art born agen.
Far over chariot's and Olympic steeds
I see the heads and the stout arms of men,
And will record (God give me power!) their deeds.

Hail to thee first, Palermo! hail to thee
Who callest with loud voice, "Arise! be free;
Weak is the hand and rusty is the chain."
Thou callest; nor in vain.

Not only from the mountain rushes forth
The knighthood of the North,
In whom my soul elate
Owns now a race cognate,
But even the couch of sloth mid painted walls
Swells up, and men start forth from it, where calls
The voice of Honor, long, too long, unheard.

Not that the wretch was feared
Who feared the meanest as he feared the best
(A reed could break his rest),
But that around all kings
Forever springs
A wasting vapor that absorbs the fire
Of all that would rise higher.

Even free nations will not let there be
More nations free.
Witness (O shame!) our own
Of eight years viler none,
The second Charles found many and made more
Base as himself: his reign is not yet o'er.

To gratify a brood
Swamp-fed amid the Suabian wood,
The sons of Lusitania were cajoled,
And bound, and sold,
And sent in chains where we unchain the slave
We die with thirst to save.

Ye, too, Sicilians, ye too gave we up
To drain the bitter cup
Ye now dash from ye in the despot's face,
O glorious race,
Which Hiero, Gelon, Pindar, sat among,
And praised for weaker deeds in deathless song;
One is yet left to laud ye. Years have marred
My voice, my prelude for some better bard,
When such shall rise, and such your deeds create.

In the lone woods, and late,
Murmurs swell loud and louder, till at last
So strong the blast
That the whole forest, earth, and sea, and sky,
To the loud surge reply.

Show, in the circle of six hundred years,
Show me a Bourbon on whose brow appears
No brand of traitor. Prune the tree,
From the same stock, forever will there be
The same foul canker, the same bitter fruit.
Strike, Sicily, uproot
The cursed upas. Never trust
That race agen; down with it, dust to dust.

Walter Savage Landor.

SICILY.

A PLEASANT land looms up against the sky:
Green hills and slopes, bright with perennial spring,
And domes and airy spires, faint glittering
Through their light wreaths of sea-mist, greet the eye,
While, floating wildly o'er the deep-blue sea,
The boatman's music lulls the enchanted ear.
Sicilia's island this, the sister fair
Who sweetly smiles on vine-clad Italy:
Alike the sharer of her sons of song,
Her black-eyed maids, her heroes, and her arts;
And drunk alike with blood of patriot hearts,
She rises, phœnix-like, from tyrants' wrong,
And asks thee, traveller, if thy wandering e'en
Have ever gazed upon a lovelier scene.

S. G. W. Benjamin.

Siena.

SIENA.

INSIDE this northern summer's fold
The fields are full of naked gold,
Broadcast from heaven on lands it loves;
The green veiled air is full of doves;
Soft leaves that sift the sunbeams let
Light on the small warm grasses wet,

Fall in short broken kisses sweet,
And break again like waves that beat
Round the sun's feet.

But I, for all this English mirth
  Of golden-shod and dancing days,
And the old green-girt, sweet-hearted earth,
  Desire what here no spell can raise.
Far hence, with holier heavens above,
The lovely city of my love
Bathes deep in the sun-satiate air
That flows round no fair thing more fair
Her beauty bare.

There the utter sky is holier, there
More pure the intense white height of air,
More clear men's eyes that mine would meet,
And the sweet springs of things more sweet.
There for this one warm note of doves
A clamor of a thousand loves
Storms the night's ear, the day's assails,
From the tempestuous nightingales,
And fills, and fails.

O gracious city well-beloved,
Italian, and a maiden crowned,
Siena, my feet are no more moved
Toward thy strange-shapen mountain-bound:
But my heart in me turns and moves,
O lady loveliest of my loves,
Toward thee, to lie before thy feet

And gaze from thy fair fountain-seat
Up the sheer street;

And the house midway hanging see
That saw Saint Catherine bodily,
Felt on its floors her sweet feet move,
And the live light of fiery love
Burn from her beautiful, strange face,
As in the sanguine sacred place
Where in pure hands she took the head
Severed, and with pure lips still red
Kissed the lips dead.

* * *

For the outer land is sad, and wears
A raiment of a flaming fire;
And the fierce, fruitless mountain stairs
Climb, yet seem wroth and loth to aspire,
Climb, and break, and are broken down,
And through their clefts and crests the town
Looks west and sees the dead sun lie
In sanguine death that stains the sky
With angry dye.

And from the war-worn wastes without
In twilight, in the time of doubt,
One sound comes of one whisper, where,
Moved with low motions of slow air,
The great trees nigh the castle swing
In the sad colored evening;
"*Ricorditi di me, che son*
La Pia," — that small sweet word alone
Is not yet gone.

"*Ricorditi di me,*" — the sound
Sole out of deep dumb days remote
Across the fiery and fatal ground
Comes tender as a hurt bird's note
To where, a ghost with empty hands,
A woe-worn ghost, her palace stands
In the mid city, where the strong
Bells turn the sunset air to song,
And the towers throng.

With other face, with speech the same,
A mightier maiden's likeness came
Late among mourning men that slept,
A sacred ghost that went and wept,
White as the passion-wounded Lamb,
Saying, "Ah, remember me, that am
Italia." (From deep sea to sea
Earth heard, earth knew her, that this was she.)
"*Ricorditi.*"

* * *

Algernon Charles Swinburne.

Soracte, the Mountain.

SORACTE.

SEE, Thaliarch, how deep in snow
Soracte stands, the laboring woods
Bend with their load, and wintry floods,
Benumbed with frost, forget to flow.

Heap log on log the spell to thaw:
  Shall winter's frown our banquet mar?
  Or from thy raciest Sabine jar
Brimful the generous magnum draw.

Commit the rest to Jove's high hand:
  At the first bidding of his will
  The wave and brawling wind are still,
Erect the ash and cypress stand.

Why, curious, turn the morrow's page?
  Set down as gain whatever chance
  The day affords; enjoy the dance,
Make love; full soon will peevish age

Put such toys by. Now let us go
  Where open square and public walk
  Buzz all around with whispered talk
And sighs at nightfall breathing low:

Thence track the scarce reluctant maid
  By laughter to her form, and snatch
  From arm or hand the ring to match,
Whereon sweet forfeit must be paid.

Horace. Tr. R. M. Hovenden.

SORACTE.

ONCE more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which — had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar

The thundering lauwine — might be worshipped more;
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

The Acroceraunian mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 't were for fame,
For still they soared unutterably high:
I 've looked on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height, displayed
Not now in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid.

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorred
Too much to conquer for the poet's sake
The drilled dull lesson, forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turned
My sickening memory; and though time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learned,
Yet such the fixed inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought,

That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine: it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse:
Although no deeper moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor bard prescribe his art,
Nor livelier satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touched heart,
Yet fare thee well, — upon Soracte's ridge we part.

Lord Byron.

Sorrento.

ISLANDS OF THE SIRENS.

SHE spake; the Morning on her golden throne
Looked forth; the glorious goddess went her way
Into the isle, I to my ship, and bade
The men embark and cast the hawsers loose.
And straight they went on board, and duly manned
The benches, smiting as they sat with oars
The hoary waters. Circè, amber-haired,
The mighty goddess of the musical voice,
Sent a fair wind behind our dark-prowed ship

That gayly bore us company, and filled
The sails. When we had fairly ordered all
On board our galley, we sat down, and left
The favoring wind and helm to bear us on,
And thus in sadness I bespake the crew: —

"My friends! it were not well that one or two
Alone should know the oracles I heard
From Circè, great among the goddesses;
And now will I disclose them, that ye all,
Whether we are to die or to escape
The doom of death, may be forewarned. And first
Against the wicked Sirens and their song
And flowery bank she warns us. I alone
May hear their voice, but ye must bind me first
With bands too strong to break, that I may stand
Upright against the mast; and let the cords
Be fastened round it. If I then entreat
And bid you loose me, make the bands more strong."

Thus to my crew I spake, and told them all
That they should know, while our good ship drew near
The island of the Sirens, prosperous gales
Wafting it gently onward. Then the breeze
Sank to a breathless calm; some deity
Had hushed the winds to slumber. Straightway rose
The men and furled the sails and laid them down
Within the ship, and sat and made the sea
White with the beating of their polished blades,
Made of the fir-tree. Then I took a mass
Of wax and cut it into many parts,
And kneaded each with a strong hand. It grew
Warm with the pressure, and the beams of him

Who journeys round the earth, the monarch Sun.
With this I filled the ears of all my men
From first to last. They bound me, in their turn,
Upright against the mast-tree, hand and foot,
And tied the cords around it. Then again
They sat and threshed with oars the hoary deep.
And when, in running rapidly, we came
So near the Sirens as to hear a voice
From where they sat, our galley flew not by
Unseen by them, and sweetly thus they sang: —
"O world-renowned Ulysses! thou who art
The glory of the Achaians, turn thy bark
Landward, that thou mayst listen to our lay.
No man has passed us in his galley yet,
Ere he has heard our warbled melodies.
He goes delighted hence a wiser man;
For all that in the spacious realm of Troy
The Greeks and Trojans by the will of Heaven
Endured we know, and all that comes to pass
In all the nations of the fruitful earth."
'T was thus they sang, and sweet the strain. I longed
To listen, and with nods I gave the sign
To set me free; they only plied their oars
The faster. Then upsprang Eurylochus
And Perimedes, and with added chords
Bound me, and drew the others still more tight.
And when we now had passed the spot, and heard
No more the melody the Sirens sang,
My comrades hastened from their ears to take
The wax, and loosed the cords and set me free.

Homer. Tr. W. C. Bryant.

ULYSSES AND THE SYREN.

SYREN.

COME, worthy Greeke, Ulysses come,
Possesse these shores with me,
The windes and seas are troublesome,
And here we may be free.
Here may we sit and view their toyle,
That travaile in the deepe,
Enjoy the day in mirth the while,
And spend the night in sleepe.

ULYSSES.

Faire nymph, if fame or honour were
To be attain'd with ease,
Then would I come and rest with thee,
And leave such toiles as these:
But here it dwels, and here must I
With danger seek it forth;
To spend the time luxuriously
Becomes not men of worth.

SYREN.

Ulysses, O be not deceiv'd
With that unreall name:
This honour is a thing conceiv'd,
And rests on others' fame.
Begotten only to molest
Our peace, and to beguile
(The best thing of our life) our rest,
And give us up to toyle!

ULYSSES.

Delicious nymph, suppose there were
Nor honor, nor report,
Yet manlinesse would scorne to weare
The time in idle sport:
For toyle doth give a better touch
To make us feele our joy;
And ease findes tediousnes, as much
As labour yeelds annoy.

SYREN.

Then pleasure likewise seemes the shore,
Whereto tendes all your toyle;
Which you forego to make it more,
And perish oft the while.
Who may disport them diversly,
Find never tedious day;
And ease may have variety,
As well as action may.

ULYSSES.

But natures of the noblest frame
These toyles and dangers please;
And they take comfort in the same,
As much as you in ease:
And with the thought of actions past
Are recreated still:
When pleasure leaves a touch at last
To shew that it was ill.

SYREN.

That doth opinion only cause
That 's out of custom bred;
Which makes us many other laws
Than ever nature did.
No widdowes waile for our delights,
Our sports are without blood;
The world we see by warlike wights
Receives more hurt than good.

ULYSSES.

But yet the state of things require
These motions of unrest,
And these great spirits of high desire
Seem borne to turne them best:
To purge the mischiefes, that increase
And all good order mar:
For oft we see a wicked peace
To be well chang'd for war.

SYREN.

Well, well, Ulysses, then I see
I shall not have thee here;
And therefore I will come to thee,
And take my fortune there.
I must be wonne that cannot win,
Yet lost were I not wonne:
For beauty hath created bin
T' undoo or be undone.

Samuel Daniel.

PIANO DI SORRENTO.

FORTÙ, Fortù, my beloved one,
Sit here by my side,
On my knees put up both little feet!
I was sure, if I tried,
I could make you laugh spite of Scirocco:
Now, open your eyes, —
Let me keep you amused till he vanish
In black from the skies,
With telling my memories over
As you tell your beads;
All the memories plucked at Sorrento, —
The flowers, or the weeds.

Time for rain! for your long hot dry Autumn
Had networked with brown
The white skin of each grape on the bunches,
Marked like a quail's crown,
Those creatures you make such account of,
Whose heads — specked with white
Over brown like a great spider's back,
As I told you last night —
Your mother bites off for her supper;
Red-ripe as could be.
Pomegranates were chapping and splitting
In halves on the tree:
And betwixt the loose walls of great flintstone,
Or in the thick dust

On the path, or straight out of the rock-side,
Wherever could thrust
Some burnt sprig of bold, hardy rock-flower,
Its yellow face up,
For the prize were great butterflies fighting,
Some five for one cup.
So I guessed, ere I got up this morning,
What change was in store,
By the quick rustle-down of the quail-nets
Which woke me before
I could open my shutter, made fast
With a bough and a stone,
And look through the twisted dead vine-twigs,
Sole lattice that 's known!
Quick and sharp rang the rings down the net-poles,
While, busy beneath,
Your priest and his brother tugged at them,
The rain in their teeth;
And out upon all the flat house-roofs
Where split figs lay drying,
The girls took the frails under cover:
Nor use seemed in trying
To get out the boats and go fishing,
For, under the cliff,
Fierce the black water frothed o'er the blind-rock.
No seeing our skiff
Arrive about noon from Amalfi, —
Our fisher arrive,
And pitch down his basket before us,
All trembling alive
With pink and gray jellies, your sea-fruit, —

You touch the strange lumps,
And mouths gape there, eyes open, all manner
Of horns and of humps,
Which only the fisher looks grave at,
While round him like imps
Cling screaming the children as naked
And brown as his shrimps:
Himself, too, as bare to the middle, —
You see round his neck
The string and its brass coin suspended,
That saves him from wreck.
But to-day not a boat reached Salerno,
So back to a man
Came our friends, with whose help in the vineyards
Grape-harvest began:
In the vat, half-way up in our house-side,
Like blood the juice spins,
While your brother all bare-legged is dancing
Till breathless he grins
Dead-beaten, in effort on effort
To keep the grapes under,
Since still when he seems all but master,
In pours the fresh plunder
From girls who keep coming and going
With basket on shoulder,
And eyes shut against the rain's driving,
Your girls that are older, —
For under the hedges of aloe,
And where, on its bed
Of the orchard's black mould, the love-apple
Lies pulpy and red,

All the young ones are kneeling and filling
Their laps with the snails
Tempted out by this first rainy weather, —
Your best of regales.
As to-night will be proved to my sorrow,
When, supping in state,
We shall feast our grape-gleaners (two dozen,
Three over one plate)
With lasagne so tempting to swallow
In slippery ropes,
And gourds fried in great purple slices,
That color of popes.
Meantime, see the grape-bunch they 've brought you, —
The rain-water slips
O'er the heavy blue bloom on each globe
Which the wasp to your lips
Still follows with fretful persistence, —
Nay, taste, while awake,
This half of a curd-white smooth cheese-ball,
That peels, flake by flake,
Like an onion's, each smoother and whiter;
Next, sip this weak wine
From the thin green glass flask, with its stopper,
A leaf of the vine, —
And end with the prickly-pear's red flesh
That leaves through its juice
The stony black seeds on your pearl-teeth.
. . . Scirocco is loose!
Hark! the quick, whistling pelt of the olives
Which, thick in one's track,
Tempt the stranger to pick up and bite them,

Though not yet half black!
How the old twisted olive-trunks shudder!
The medlars let fall
Their hard fruit, and the brittle great fig-trees
Snap off, figs and all, —
For here comes the whole of the tempest!
No refuge, but creep
Back again to my side and my shoulder,
And listen or sleep.

O, how will your country show next week,
When all the vine-boughs
Have been stripped of their foliage to pasture
The mules and the cows?
Last eve, I rode over the mountains;
Your brother, my guide,
Soon left me, to feast on the myrtles
That offered, each side,
Their fruit-balls, black, glossy, and luscious, —
Or strip from the sorbs
A treasure, so rosy and wondrous,
Of hairy gold orbs!
But my mule picked his sure, sober path out,
Just stopping to neigh
When he recognized down in the valley
His mates on their way
With the fagots, and barrels of water;
And soon we emerged
From the plain, where the woods could scarce follow;
And still as we urged
Our way, the woods wondered, and left us,

As up still we trudged
Though the wild path grew wilder each instant,
And place was e'en grudged
Mid the rock-chasms, and piles of loose stones
(Like the loose broken teeth
Of some monster, which climbed there to die
From the ocean beneath),
Place was grudged to the silver-gray fume-weed
That clung to the path,
And dark rosemary, ever a-dying,
That, 'spite the wind's wrath,
So loves the salt rock's face to seaward, —
And lentisks as stanch
To the stone where they root and bear berries, —
And . . . what shows a branch
Coral-colored, transparent, with circlets
Of pale sea-green leaves, —
Over all trod my mule with the caution
Of gleaners o'er sheaves,
Still, foot after foot like a lady, —
So, round after round,
He climbed to the top of Calvano,
And God's own profound
Was above me, and round me the mountains,
And under, the sea,
And within me, my heart to bear witness
What was and shall be!
O heaven, and the terrible crystal!
No rampart excludes
Your eye from the life to be lived
In the blue solitudes!
O, those mountains, their infinite movement!

Still moving with you, —
For, ever some new head and breast of them
Thrusts into view
To observe the intruder, — you see it
If quickly you turn
And, before they escape you, surprise them, —
They grudge you should learn
How the soft plains they look on, lean over,
And love (they pretend) —
Cower beneath them; the flat sea-pine crouches,
The wild fruit-trees bend,
E'en the myrtle-leaves curl, shrink, and shut, —
All is silent and grave, —
'T is a sensual and timorous beauty, —
How fair, but a slave!
So I turned to the sea, — and there slumbered
As greenly as ever
Those isles of the siren, your Galli;
No ages can sever
The Three, nor enable their sister
To join them, — half-way
On the voyage, she looked at Ulysses, —
No farther to-day;
Though the small one, just launched in the wave,
Watches breast-high and steady
From under the rock, her bold sister
Swum half-way already.
Fortù, shall we sail there together
And see from the sides
Quite new rocks show their faces, — new haunts
Where the siren abides?
Shall we sail round and round them, close over

The rocks, though unseen,
That ruffle the gray glassy water
To glorious green?
Then scramble from splinter to splinter,
Reach land and explore,
On the largest, the strange square black turret
With never a door,
Just a loop to admit the quick lizards;
Then stand there and hear
The birds' quiet singing, that tells us
What life is, so clear!
The secret they sang to Ulysses,
When, ages ago,
He heard and he knew this life's secret,
I hear and I know!

Ah, see! The sun breaks o'er Calvano —
He strikes the great gloom
And flutters it o'er the mount's summit
In airy gold fume!
All is over! Look out, see the gypsy,
Our tinker and smith,
Has arrived, set up bellows and forge,
And down-squatted forthwith
To his hammering, under the wall there;
One eye keeps aloof
The urchins that itch to be putting
His jews-harps to proof,
While the other, through locks of curled wire,
Is watching how sleek
Shines the hog, come to share in the windfalls —
An abbot's own cheek!

All is over! Wake up and come out now,
And down let us go,
And see the fine things got in order
At Church for the show
Of the Sacrament, set forth this evening;
To-morrow 's the Feast
Of the Rosary's Virgin, by no means
Of Virgins the least, —
As you 'll hear in the off-hand discourse
Which (all nature, no art)
The Dominican brother, these three weeks,
Was getting by heart.
Not a post nor a pillar but 's dizened
With red and blue papers;
All the roof waves with ribbons, each altar
Ablaze with long tapers;
But the great masterpiece is the scaffold
Rigged glorious to hold
All the fiddlers and fifers and drummers,
And trumpeters bold,
Not afraid of Bellini nor Auber,
Who, when the priest's hoarse,
Will strike us up something that 's brisk
For the feast's second course.
And then will the flaxen-wigged Image
Be carried in pomp
Through the plain, while in gallant procession
The priests mean to stomp.
And all round the glad church lie old bottles
With gunpowder stopped,
Which will be, when the Image re-enters,
Religiously popped.

And at night, from the crest of Calvano
Great bonfires will hang,
On the plain will the trumpets join chorus,
And more poppers bang!
At all events, come — to the garden,
As far as the wall,
See me tap with a hoe on the plaster
Till out there shall fall
A scorpion with wide angry nippers!

. . . "Such trifles," — you say?
Fortù, in my England at home,
Men meet gravely to-day
And debate, if abolishing Corn-laws
Is righteous and wise, —
If 't is proper, Scirocco should vanish
In black from the skies!

Robert Browning.

WRITTEN IN TASSO'S HOUSE AT SORRENTO.

O LEONORA, here thy Tasso dwelt,
Secure, ere yet thy beauty he had seen:
Here with bright face and unterrestrial mien
He walked, ere yet thy shadow he had felt.
From that green rock he watched the sunset melt,
On through the waves; yon cavern was his screen,
When first those hills, which gird the glowing scene,
Were thronged with heavenly warriors, and he knelt
To hail the vision! Siren baths to him
Were nothing; Pagan grot, or classic fane,
Or glistening pavement seen through billows dim.

Far, far o'er these he gazed on Judah's plain;
And more than manhood wrought was in the boy,—
Why did the stranger meddle in his joy?

Aubrey de Vere.

SORRENTO.

ITALIAN paradise, Sorrento! thou
Hast spells enchaining; lo, yon bosomed bay
Where the lone crag upheaves its cloven brow,
Round which the blue waves chafe in idle play;
Know'st thou whose mighty spirit casts a ray
O'er its dim cavern? know'st thou who stood there
Embodying in his world-inspiring lay
Its tale? whose genius fills, informs the air,
Whose phantoms round that spot forever shall repair?

Even now, reclining on this mossy stone,
I see the sail spread from Lachæa's isle:
They scale the Cyclop's cave, a shout, a groan,
In his red eye is plunged the fiery pile!
Lo, with the morning's light the goats defile
Slowly beneath the blinded monster's hand:
Free stands at length the hero of the wile;
And now the giant's clamors fill the strand,
As shouting bound from shore the Ulysséan band!

Thou everlasting Homer! every nook
Of this all wild yet lovely coast is thine;
The Sirens yon gray islets have forsook,
Yet is each vestige of their haunt divine:
Doth not thy awful genius o'er them shine,

Bright as yon setting sun that steeps them o'er
With hues of life? so thy embodying line
From phantasy dost hero life restore,
Until we hear their tongues and see the forms they wore.

For by thy hand truth, sceptre-like, was wielded;
Lo, yon blue promontory, Circe's spell
There changed to brutes the slaves to vice who yielded;
Speaks not thy moral eloquently well?
What herb save reason could her power compel,
And bid her kneel to virtue? o'er the foam
Why sighed the chief in Ithaca to dwell,
Her charms unfelt and loathed her starry dome?
Grave duty showed afar his wife, his son, his home.

There was a dwelling on the sea-cliff's side,
No ruined vestige doth its site attest;
A secret nook where love would choose to hide
Its loved one from the world, a haven nest
Of shelter, when of all it asks possessed,
The heart would find or make its earthly heaven
Where only found, in woman's answering breast;
All other ties save that sole life-tie riven:
The world's neglect forgot, its injuries forgiven.

A sacred spot! create it on thine eye;
Hallowed by suffering and by virtue's tear,
And this is sanctified by memory
Of venerating bosoms that revere
The martyrs of the past who suffered here;
O'er whom are offered human sympathies,
Heart-flowers, whose dews spiritualize the bier:

A woman by that shore with heedful eyes
Watches a nearing sail whose white wing homeward flies.

The sister's love, the vestal, and the pure,
Recalls again affection's wasted force
In exiled Tasso: other loves endure
To perish, lighted at an earthlier source,
Satiate with passion, buried in remorse;
If the heart own one pure receptacle,
One feeling flowing holier in its course,
Love that a spirit might not blush to tell,
'T is when a sister's heart to thine doth fondly swell.

The wanderer came for quiet: to forget
The blighted hope, the inexpiable wrong,
To soften here in solitude regret
Of a love stamped immortal in his song,
That but for him had lain the dead among;
Vain essay! if thou wouldst the thought conceal,
Or forms that ghost-like to the past belong,
If the heart's wounds corroding thou wouldst heal,
That solitude thou seek'st to thee shall all reveal:

Making the past one present; odors bear
Vibrations thrilling along memory's chain,
Felt in the chords of being till they wear
Its pulse away: so did he feel how vain
To realize his boyhood's hope again;
Till his last refuge from self-tyranny,
He flew from nature's ever-populous reign
Back to the desert of humanity,
To bear hate, scorn, repulse, to madden, and to die.

John Edmund Reade.

SORRENTO.

SORRENTO! Bright star! Land
Of myrtle and vine,
I come from a far land
To kneel at thy shrine;
Thy brows wear a garland,
O, weave one for mine!

Her mirror thy city
Fair finds in the sea, —
A youth sings a pretty
Song, tempered with glee, —
The mirth and the ditty
Are mournful to me.

Ah, sea boy, how strange is
The carol you sing!
Let Psyche, who ranges
The gardens of Spring,
Remember the changes
December will bring.

Frederick Locker.

SORRENTO.

MIDWAY betwixt the present and the past,
Naples and Pæstum, look! Sorrento lies:
Ulysses built it, and the Sirens cast
Their spell upon the shore, the sea, the skies.

If thou hast dreamed, in any dream of thine,
How Paradise appears, or those Elysian
Immortal meadows which the gods assign
Unto the pure of heart, — behold thy vision!

These waters, they are blue beyond belief,
Nor hath green England greener fields than these:
The sun, — 't is Italy's; here winter 's brief
And gentle visit hardly chills the breeze.

Here Tasso dwelt, and here inhaled with spring
The breath of passion and the soul of song.
Here young Boccaccio plumed his early wing,
Thenceforth to soar above the vulgar throng.

All charms of contrast — every nameless grace
That lives in outline, harmony, or hue —
So heighten all the romance of the place,
That the rapt artist maddens at the view,

And then despairs, and throws his pencil by,
And sits all day and looks upon the shore
And the calm ocean with a languid eye,
As though to labor were a law no more.

Voluptuous coast! no wonder that the proud
Imperial Roman found in yonder isle
Some sunshine still to gild Fate's gathering cloud,
And lull the storm of conscience for a while.

What new Tiberius, tired of lust and life,
May rest him here to give the world a truce, —

A little truce from perjury and strife,
Justice adulterate and power's misuse?

Might the gross Bourbon, — he that sleeps in spite
Of red Vesuvius ever in his eye,
Yet, if he wake, should tremble at its light,
As 't were Heaven's vengeance, promised from on high, —

Or that poor gamester, of so cunning play,
Who, up at last, in Fortune's fickle dance,
Aping the mighty in so mean a way,
Makes now his dice the destinies of France, —

Might they, or any of Oppression's band,
Sit here and learn the lesson of the scene,
Peace might return to many a bleeding land,
And men grow just again, and life serene.

Thomas William Parsons.

TASSO.

HE who sets sail from Naples when the wind
Blows fragrance from Posílipo may soon,
Crossing from side to side that beautiful lake,
Land underneath the cliff, where once among
The children gathering shells along the shore,
One laughed and played, unconscious of his fate;
His to drink deep of sorrow, and through life
To be the scorn of them that knew him not,
Trampling alike the giver and his gift, —

The gift a pearl precious, inestimable,
A lay divine, a lay of love and war,
To charm, ennoble, and from age to age
Sweeten the labor when the oar was plied
Or on the Adrian or the Tuscan sea.

Samuel Rogers.

THE CHILD'S FUNERAL.

FAIR is thy site, Sorrento, green thy shore,
Black crags behind thee pierce the clear blue skies;
The sea, whose borderers ruled the world of yore,
As clear and bluer still before thee lies.

Vesuvius smokes in sight, whose fount of fire,
Outgushing, drowned the cities on his steeps;
And murmuring Naples, spire o'ertopping spire,
Sits on the slope beyond where Virgil sleeps.

Here doth the earth, with flowers of every hue,
Heap her green breast when April suns are bright,
Flowers of the morning-red, or ocean-blue,
Or like the mountain frost of silvery white.

Currents of fragrance, from the orange-tree,
And sward of violets, breathing to and fro,
Mingle, and, wandering out upon the sea,
Refresh the idle boatsman where they blow.

Yet even here, as under harsher climes,
Tears for the loved and early lost are shed;

That soft air saddens with the funeral chimes,
Those shining flowers are gathered for the dead.

Here once a child, a smiling playful one,
All the day long caressing and caressed,
Died when its little tongue had just begun
To lisp the names of those it loved the best.

The father strove his struggling grief to quell,
The mother wept as mothers use to weep,
Two little sisters wearied them to tell
When their dear Carlo would awake from sleep.

Within an inner room his couch they spread,
His funeral couch; with mingled grief and love,
They laid a crown of roses on his head,
And murmured, "Brighter is his crown above."

They scattered round him, on the snowy sheet,
Laburnum's strings of sunny-colored gems,
Sad hyacinths, and violets dim and sweet,
And orange blossoms on their dark green stems.

And now the hour is come, the priest is there;
Torches are lit, and bells are tolled; they go,
With solemn rites of blessing and of prayer,
To lay the little corpse in earth below.

The door is opened; hark! that quick glad cry;
Carlo has waked, has waked, and is at play;
The little sisters laugh and leap, and try
To climb the bed on which the infant lay.

And there he sits alone, and gayly shakes
In his full hands the blossoms red and white,
And smiles with winking eyes, like one who wakes
From long deep slumbers at the morning light.

William Cullen Bryant.

SORRENTO.

THE midnight, thick with cloud,
Hangs o'er the city's jar,
The spirit's shell is in the crowd,
The spirit is afar;
Far, where in shadowy gloom
Sleeps the dark orange grove,
My sense is drunk with its perfume,
My heart with love.

The slumberous, whispering sea,
Creeps up the sands to lay
Its sliding bosom fringed with pearls
Upon the rounded bay.
List! all the trembling leaves
Are rustling overhead,
Where purple grapes are hanging dark
On the trellised *loggia* spread.

Far off, a misted cloud,
Hangs fair Inarimé.
The boatman's song from the lighted boat
Rises from out the sea.
We listen, — then thy voice
Pours forth a honeyed rhyme;

Ah! for the golden nights we passed
In our Italian time.

There is the laugh of girls
That walk along the shore,
The *marinaio* calls to them
As he suspends his oar.
Vesuvius rumbles sullenly,
With fitful lurid gleam,
The background of all Naples life,
The nightmare of its dream.

O lovely, lovely Italy,
I yield me to thy spell!
Reach the guitar, my dearest friend,
We 'll sing, "Home! fare thee well!"
O world of work and noise,
What spell hast thou for me?
The siren Beauty charms me here
Beyond the sea.

William Wetmore Story.

SORRENTO.

I.

ON such a blue and breezy summer's day
The winds seem charmed that wander round this Bay.
The murmuring waves upon the sunward beach
Whisper of things beyond the present's reach.
Each wingéd bark that skims along the sea
Seems gliding in a haze of mystery.

Light of far Grecian days comes glimmering through
This pure crystalline sky of cloudless blue.
Here are the rocks where gold-haired sirens sang.
Here Tasso's harp in later ages rang.
Over the sacred waves the purple isles
Answer the heavens with their serenest smiles;
Round yonder point steep Capri with her caves;
Beyond, where the sky kisses the far waves,
Those amethystine sisters of the sea,
Prochyta, and the blue Inarimé.
Gemming the shore from Baiæ's ruined towers
To marble Pompeii, half embalmed in flowers,
Stretches the chain of towns along the sea;
While gleaming in the midst Parthenope
Sits crowned with palaces, an ocean queen
Gazing into her mirror of clear green.
And over all, the bodeful genius
Of this fair clime, fire-eyed Vesuvius
Frowns, the sole troubled spirit of the scene,
Yet even him the distance makes serene.

All this I see from my still summer home,
A bower where naught but peace and beauty come.
Geraniums and roses round me bloom,
From orange groves, amid whose verdant gloom
Gold fruit and silver flowers together shine,
Come tropic odors. A thick blossoming vine
Shadows the terrace, where, e'en as I write,
The wind snows down the olive blossoms white.
Above, the birds sing their unwearied song,
Beneath, the ocean whispers all day long.

Sometimes when morning lights the rippling waves
Below the steep rocks and the ocean caves,
The sunshine weaves a net of flickering gleams
Fit to entrap a siren in her dreams.
There tangled braids of ever-changing light
In golden mazes glitter up the sands;
And underneath the rocks and pebbles bright
Are jewelled with the wealth of Eastern lands.
Well might such sweet transparent waters hold
Tritons and nymphs with locks of dripping gold,
For nothing were too wonderful to be
Born from the pure depths of this summer sea.

II.

Four moons have passed, and days and nights have flown
Cloudless, — a summer of an orient tone,
Since my unequal pen essayed to tell
Brief passages of what I loved so well.
Above me now, where blossoms fell in spring,
Large purple grapes hang thickly clustering.
The fig-tree near with ample leaves displayed
Shelters its sweet cool fruit beneath their shade.
Still hang the oranges upon their stems
Whose dark green foliage makes them glow like gems.
The cypresses by yonder convent wall
Shoot up as freshly green, as stately tall;
And there the drowsy vesper-bell ne'er tires
Calling to prayers the brown-robed, bearded friars.
Down on the beach, content with slender gain,
Still drag their nets the red-capped fishermen.
Still glide the days as fair, the nights more cool;

The sea is still as ever beautiful.
And yonder purple mountain towering proud
Still blends his light smoke with the flying cloud.
And now, ere I these pleasant scenes resign,
I would repaint each hue, retouch each line.
I would remember every odorous breeze
That sighed in the deep shade of citron-trees,
The roses clustering on their leafy stalks,
Dropping their faint leaves in the garden walks;
The sweet geraniums and the passion-flowers
Twining through countless roses; the noon hours
When underneath the oaks I watched the sea
Rippling below me calm and dreamily;
The hueless olives when the full moon came
Kindling behind them with a holy flame,
Touching their pale leaves with mysterious sheen,
And shimmering o'er old trunks of silvery green.
Above, the inextinguishable lights
That made all nights in heaven like festal nights,
That seemed too sacred for frail men to keep,
And yet too costly to be spent in sleep.
O lovely days and nights! too quickly flown, —
Leave me the memory of your sweetest tone.
O ocean! long I 've lingered on thy shore,
Lulled by thy whisper, wakened by thy roar.
Ere I depart and see no more thy face,
Let me retain some sign of thy embrace;
Not pearls, nor painted shells, nor coral rare,
But dreams of beauty from the goddess fair
Who in a sea-shell rose from out thy foam,
And rules all hearts, and fills the Olympian home.

Christopher Pearse Cranch.

LINES WRITTEN AT SORRENTO.

THE wild waves madly dash and roar,
In thunder-throbs, upon the beach;
Their broad white hands upon the shore
They struggle evermore to reach.

Up through the cavernous rocks amain,
With short, hoarse growl, they plunge and leap,
Like an armed host, again and again,
Battering some castellated steep.

Great pulses of the ocean heart,
Beating from out immensity,
What mystic news would ye impart
From the great spirit of the sea?

Ever, in still increasing force,
Earnest as cries of love or hate,
Your large and eloquent discourse
Is mighty as the march of fate.

I sit alone on the glowing sand,
Filled with the music of your speech,
And only half may understand
The wondrous lore that ye would teach.

The sea-weed and the shells are wise,
And versed in your broad Sanscrit tongue;

The rocks need not our ears and eyes
To comprehend the under-song.

The ocean and the shore are one;
The rocks and trees that hang above,
The birds and insects in the sun
Are linked in one strong tie of love.

Would that I might with freedom be
A seer into your hidden truth,
Joining your firm fraternity,
To drink with you perpetual youth!

Christopher Pearse Cranch.

SORRENTO.

THE gods are gone, the temples overthrown,
The storms of time the very rocks have shaken:
The Past is mute, save where some mouldy stone
Speaks to confuse, like speech by age o'ertaken.
The pomp that crowned the winding shore
Has fled forevermore:
Its old magnificence shall never reawaken.

Where once against the Grecian ships arrayed,
The Oscan warriors saw their javelins hurtle,
The farmer prunes his olives, and the maid
Trips down the lanes in flashing vest and kirtle:
The everlasting laurel now
Forgets Apollo's brow,
And, dedicate no more to Venus, blooms the myrtle.

Yet still, as long ago, when this high coast
Phœnician strangers saw, and flying Dardans,
The bounteous earth fulfils her ancient boast
In mellow fields which winter never hardens;
And daisy, lavender, and rose
Perpetual buds unclose,
To flood with blended balm the tiers of hanging gardens.

From immemorial rocks the daffodil
Beckons with scented stars, an unreached wonder:
On sunny banks their wine the hyacinths spill,
And self-betraying violets bloom thereunder;
While near and threatening, dim and deep,
The wave assaults the steep,
Or booms in hollow caves with sound of smothered thunder.

Here nature, dropping once her ordered plan,
Fashioned all lovely things that most might please her,
Hiding her playground where the greed of man
Must half withhold the toiling hands that tease her:
Her sweetest air, her softest wave,
Reluctantly she gave
To grace the wealth of Rome, to heal the languid Cæsar!

She stationed there Vesuvius, to be
Contrasted horror to her idyl tender:
Across the azure pavement of the sea
She raised a cape for Baïæ's marble splendor;

And westward, on the circling zone,
To front the seas unknown,
She planted Capri's couchant lion to defend her.

A mother kind, she doth but tantalize:
Not from her secret gardens will she spurn us.
The Roman, casting hitherward his eyes,
Forgot his Sybaris beside Volturnus, —
Forgot the streams and sylvan charms
That decked his Sabine farms,
And orchards on the slopes that sink to still Avernus.

Here was his substance wasted: here he lost
The marrow that subdued the world, in leisure;
Counting no days that were not feasts, no cost
Too dear to purchase other forms of pleasure;
Yet, while for him stood still the sun,
The restless world rolled on,
And shook from off its skirts Cæsar and Cæsar's treasure.

Less than he sought will we: a moon of peace,
To feed the mind on Fancy's airy diet;
Soft airs that come like memories of Greece,
Nights that renew the old Egyptian quiet:
Escape from yonder burning crest
That stirs with new unrest,
And in its lava-streams keeps hot the endless riot.

Here, from the wars of Gaul, the strife of Rome,
May we, meek citizens, a summer screen us:

Here find with milder Earth a perfect home,
Once, ere she puts profounder rest between us:
Here break the sacred laurel bough
Still for Apollo's brow,
And bind the myrtle buds to crown a purer Venus.

Bayard Taylor.

Spezzia, the Gulf.

THE FELUCA.

DAY glimmered; and beyond the precipice
(Which my mule followed as in love with fear,
Or as in scorn, yet more and more inclining
To tempt the danger where it menaced most)
A sea of vapor rolled. Methought we went
Along the utmost edge of this, our world,
And the next step had hurled us headlong down
Into the wild and infinite abyss;
But soon the surges fled, and we descried
Nor dimly, though the lark was silent yet,
Thy gulf, La Spezzia. Ere the morning-gun,
Ere the first day-streak, we alighted there;
And not a breath, a murmur! Every sail
Slept in the offing. Yet along the shore
Great was the stir; as at the noontide hour,
None unemployed. Where from its native rock
A streamlet, clear and full, ran to the sea,
The maidens knelt and sung as they were wont,

Washing their garments. Where it met the tide,
Sparkling and lost, an ancient pinnace lay
Keel upward, and the fagot blazed, the tar
Fumed from the caldron; while, beyond the fort,
Whither I wandered, step by step led on,
The fishers dragged their net, the fish within
At every heave fluttering and full of life,
At every heave striking their silver fins
'Gainst the dark meshes.

* * *

At length the day departed, and the moon
Rose like another sun, illumining
Waters and woods and cloud-capt promontories,
Glades for a hermit's cell, a lady's bower,
Scenes of Elysium, such as night alone
Reveals below, nor often, — scenes that fled
As at the waving of a wizard's wand,
And left behind them, as their parting gift,
A thousand nameless odors. All was still;
And now the nightingale her song poured forth
In such a torrent of heartfelt delight,
So fast it flowed, her tongue so voluble,
As if she thought her hearers would be gone
Ere half was told. 'T was where in the northwest,
Still unassailed and unassailable,
Thy pharos, Genoa, first displayed itself,
Burning in stillness on its craggy seat;
That guiding star so oft the only one,
When those now glowing in the azure vault
Are dark and silent. 'T was where o'er the sea
(For we were now within a cable's length)

Delicious gardens hung; green galleries,
And marble terraces in many a flight,
And fairy arches flung from cliff to cliff,
Wildering, enchanting; and, above them all,
A palace, such as somewhere in the East,
In Zenastan or Araby the blest,
Among its golden groves and fruits of gold,
And fountains scattering rainbows in the sky,
Rose, when Aladdin rubbed the wondrous lamp, —
Such, if not fairer; and when we shot by,
A scene of revelry, in long array
As with the radiance of the setting sun,
The windows blazing. But we now approached
A city far-renowned; and wonder ceased.

Samuel Rogers.

Spiaggiascura.

SPIAGGIASCURA.

THERE is a little city in the South,
A silent little city by the sea,
Where a stilled Alpine torrent finds its mouth,
And billowy mountains subside smilingly.
It knows nor weeping skies nor dewless drouth,
No seasons, save when April's glancing glee
Slow steadies unto Summer's still-poised wing,
Or mimic Winter lifts the mask from Spring.

Once on a time it was a famous city,
Home of urbane humanities and strife,

When men were knightly still, and women witty,
And court and camp with revelry were rife.
Now is it hushed as long-forgotten ditty,
Secluded almshouse of a bankrupt life,
Refuge for him who, after days of riot,
Seeketh the safe monotony of quiet.

No traveller's busy footstep cometh there,
No pallid form, more painlessly to die;
No gainful barter thither doth repair;
Even the boatman's oar and net pass by.
No clattering wheel and whip offend the air;
Its streets but lead to mountain, sea, and sky,
And, when gaunt Winter stalks our shivering isle,
Bask, backed by hills, in ocean's rippling smile.

Alfred Austin.

Syracuse.

SYRACUSE.

BUT when he reached that island, far away,
Forth from the dark-blue ocean-swell he stepped
Upon the sea-beach, walking till he came
To the vast cave in which the bright-haired nymph
Made her abode. He found the nymph within;
A fire blazed brightly on the hearth, and far
Was wafted o'er the isle the fragrant smoke
Of cloven cedar, burning in the flame,

And cypress-wood. Meanwhile, in her recess,
She sweetly sang, as busily she threw
The golden shuttle through the web she wove.
And all about the grotto alders grew,
And poplars, and sweet-smelling cypresses.
In a green forest, high among whose boughs
Birds of broad wing, wood-owls, and falcons built
Their nests, and crows, with voices sounding far,
All haunting for their food the ocean-side,
A vine, with downy leaves and clustering grapes,
Crept over all the cavern rock. Four springs
Poured forth their glittering waters in a row,
And here and there went wandering side by side.
Around were meadows of soft green, o'ergrown
With violets and parsley. 'T was a spot
Where even an immortal might awhile
Linger, and gaze with wonder and delight.

Homer. Tr. W. C. Bryant.

SYRACUSE.

I.

BEAUTEOUS Ortygia! the first breathing-place
Of great Alpheus' close and amorous race,
Fair Delos' sister, the childbed
Of bright Latona, where she bred
The original new-moon, —
Who saw'st her tender forehead ere the horns were grown!
Who, like a gentle scion, newly started out

From Syracusa's side dost sprout;
Thee, first, my song does greet
With numbers smooth and fleet
As thine own horses' airy feet,
When they young Chromius' chariot drew,
And o'er the Nemæan race triumphant flew.
Jove will approve my song and me;
Jove is concerned in Nemea, and in thee.

II.

With Jove, my song; this happy man,
Young Chromius, too, with Jove began;
From hence came his success;
Nor ought he, therefore, like it less,
Since the best fame is that of happiness;
For whom should we esteem above
The men whom gods do love?
'T is them, alone, the Muse, too, does approve.
Lo, how it makes this victory shine
O'er all the fruitful isle of Proserpine!
The torches which the mother brought,
When the ravished maid she sought,
Appeared not half so bright,
But cast a weaker light
Through earth and air and seas and up to the heavenly vault.

III.

"To thee, O Proserpine, this isle I give,"
Said Jove, and as he said

Smiled, and bent his gracious head.
"And thou, O isle," said he, "forever thrive,
And keep the value of our gift alive;
As heaven with stars, so let
The country thick with towns be set;
And, numberless as stars,
Let all the towns be then
Replenished, thick, with men
Wise in peace and bold in wars;
Of thousand glorious towns the nation,
Of thousand glorious men each town a constellation,
Nor let their warlike laurel scorn
With the Olympic olive to be worn,
Whose gentler honors do so well the brows of Peace
adorn!"

IV.

Go to great Syracuse, my Muse! and wait
At Chromius' hospitable gate;
'T will open wide to let thee in,
When thy lyre's voice shall but begin;
Joy, plenty, and free welcome, dwells within.
The Tyrian beds thou shalt find ready dressed,
The ivory table crowded with a feast.
The table which is free for every guest
No doubt will thee admit,
And feast more upon thee than thou on it.
Chromius and thou art met aright,
For as by nature thou dost write,
So he by nature loves, and does by nature fight.

V.

Nature herself, whilst in the womb he was,
Sowed strength and beauty through the forming mass;
They moved the vital lump in every part,
And carved the members out with wondrous art.
She filled his mind with courage, and with wit,
And a vast bounty, apt and fit
For the great dower which Fortune made to it.
'T is madness, sure, treasures to hoard,
And make them useless (as in mines) remain,
To lose the occasion Fortune does afford
Fame and public love to gain.
Even for self-concerning ends
'T is wiser much to hoard up friends.
Though happy men the present goods possess,
The unhappy have their share in future hopes no less.

VI.

How early has young Chromius begun
The race of virtue, and how swiftly run,
And borne the noble prize away,
Whilst other youths yet at the barrier stay!
None but Alcides e'er set earlier forth than he;
The god his father's blood naught could restrain,
'T was ripe at first, and did disdain
The slow advance of dull humanity.
The big-limbed babe in his huge cradle lay,
Too weighty to be rocked by nurses' hands,
Wrapped in purple swaddling-bands;
When, lo! by jealous Juno's fierce commands

Two dreadful serpents come,
Rolling and hissing loud, into the room;
To the bold babe they trace their bidden way;
Forth from their flaming eyes dread lightnings went;
Their gaping mouths did forked tongues, like thunder-bolts, present.

VII.

Some of the amazed women dropped down, dead
With fear; some wildly fled
About the room; some into corners crept,
Where silently they shook and wept.
All naked, from her bed, the passionate mother leaped
To save, or perish with her child;
She trembled, and she cried; the mighty infant smiled
The mighty infant seemed well-pleased
At his gay, gilded foes;
And as their spotted necks up to the cradle rose,
With his young warlike hands on both he seized;
In vain they raged, in vain they hissed,
In vain their armed tails they twist,
And angry circles cast about;
Black blood and fiery breath and poisonous soul he squeezes out.

VIII.

With their drawn swords
In ran Amphitryo and the Theban lords;
With doubting wonder and with troubled joy
They saw the conquering boy
Laugh, and point downwards to his prey,

Where, in death's pangs and their own gore, they folding lay.
When wise Tiresias this beginning knew,
He told with ease the things to ensue,
From what monsters he should free
The earth, the air, and sea;
What mighty tyrants he should slay,
Greater monsters far than they;
How much at Phlægra's field the distressed gods should owe
To their great offspring here below,
And how his club should there outdo
Apollo's silver bow, and his own father's thunder too.

IX.

And that the grateful gods, at last,
(The race of his laborious virtue passed,)
Heaven, which he saved, should to him give,
Where, married to eternal Youth, he should forever live;
Drink nectar with the gods, and all his senses please
In their harmonious, golden palaces;
Walk with ineffable delight
Through the thick groves of never-withering light,
And, as he walks, affright
The lion and the bear,
Bull, centaur, scorpion, all the radiant monsters there.

Pindar. Tr. Abraham Cowley.

ALPHEUS AND ARETHUSA.

FROM where his silver waters glide,
Majestic, to the ocean-tide
Through fair Olympia's plain,
Still his dark course Alpheus keeps
Beneath the mantle of the deeps,
Nor mixes with the main.

To grace his distant bride, he pours
The sand of Pisa's sacred shores,
And flowers that decked her grove;
And, rising from the unconscious brine,
On Arethusa's breast divine
Receives the meed of love.

'T is thus with soft bewitching skill
The childish god deludes our will,
And triumphs o'er our pride;
The mighty river owns his force,
Bends to the sway his winding course,
And dives beneath the tide.

Moschus. Tr. Robert Bland.

SYRACUSE.

STRETCHING in front of the Sicanian bay
And opposite wave-washed Plemmyrium, lies
An isle, to which the ancients gave the name
Ortygia. Hither, so the legends say,

Alpheus, Elis' river, underneath
The ocean found a secret way, and now
Mingles with Arethusa's stream, and flows
With the Sicilian waves.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

ARETHUSA.

ARETHUSA arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains;
From cloud and from crag
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.
She leapt down the rocks,
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;
Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine
Which slopes to the western gleams;
And gliding and springing,
She went, ever singing,
In murmurs as soft as sleep,
The earth seemed to love her,
And heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered towards the deep.

Then Alpheus bold,
On his glacier cold,
With his trident the mountains strook;

And opened a chasm
In the rocks; — with the spasm
All Erymanthus shook.
And the black south-wind
It concealed behind
The urns of the silent snow,
And earthquake and thunder
Did rend in sunder
The bars of the springs below;
The beard and the hair
Of the river-god were
Seen through the torrent's sweep,
As he followed the light
Of the fleet nymph's flight
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

"O, save me! O, guide me,
And bid the deep hide me,
For he grasps me now by the hair!"
The loud Ocean heard,
To its blue depth stirred,
And divided at her prayer;
And under the water
The Earth's white daughter
Fled like a sunny beam;
Behind her descended
Her billows, unblended
With the brackish Dorian stream;
Like a gloomy stain
On the emerald main
Alpheus rushed behind, —

As an eagle pursuing
A dove to its ruin
Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers
Where the ocean powers
Sit on their pearléd thrones;
Through the coral woods
Of the weltering floods,
Over heaps of unvalued stones;
Through the dim beams
Which amid the streams
Weave a network of colored light;
And under the caves,
Where the shadowy waves
Are as green as the forest's night;—
Outspeeding the shark,
And the sword-fish dark,
Under the ocean foam,
And up through the rifts
Of the mountain clifts
They passed to their Dorian home.

And now from their fountains
In Enna's mountains,
Down one vale where the morning basks,
Like friends once parted,
Grown single-hearted,
They ply their watery tasks.
At sunrise they leap
From their cradles steep

In the cave of the shelving hill;
At noontide they flow
Through the woods below
And the meadows of asphodel;
And at night they sleep
In the rocking deep
Beneath the Ortygian shore;—
Like spirits that lie
In the azure sky
When they love but live no more.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

SICILIAN ARETHUSA.

SICILIAN Arethusa! thou, whose arms
Of azure round the Thymbrian meadows wind,
Still are thy margins lined
With the same flowers Proserpina was weaving
In Enna's field, beside Pergusa's lake,
When swarthy Dis, upheaving,
Saw her, and, stung to madness by her charms,
Down snatched her, shrieking, to his Stygian couch.
Thy waves, Sicilian Arethusa, flow
In cadence to the shepherd's flageolet
As tunefully as when they wont to crouch
Beneath the banks to catch the pipings low
Of old Theocritus, and hear him trill
Bucolic songs, and Amoebæan lays.
And still, Sicilian Arethusa, still,
Though Etna dry thee up, or frosts enchain,
Thy music shall be heard, for poets high

Have dipped their wreaths in thee, and by their praise
Made thee immortal as themselves. Thy flowers,
Transplanted, an eternal bloom retain,
Rooted in words that cannot fade or die.
Thy liquid gush and guggling melody
Have left undying echoes in the bowers
Of tuneful poesy. Thy very name,
Sicilian Arethusa, had been drowned
In deep oblivion, but that the buoyant breath
Of bards uplifted it, and bade it swim
Adown the eternal lapse, assured of fame,
Till all things shall be swallowed up in death.
Where, Immortality, where canst thou found
Thy throne unperishing, but in the hymn
Of the true bard, whose breath encrusts his theme
Like to a petrifaction, which the stream
Of time will only make more durable?

Horace Smith.

SYRACUSE.

IN brighter days the Dorian Muse
Extolled the kings of Syracuse.
Hieros and Gelons shook the rein
Of coursers on the Olympic plain,
Victors at Elis, where they won
A crown no king can leave his son.
There Pindar struck his harp aloud,
And shared the applauses of the crowd.
Then Science from deep study raised
A greater man than bards have praised.

When Syracuse met Roman foes,
Above her proudest he arose;
He called from heaven the Lord of Light
To lend him his all-piercing might.
The patriot's pious prayer was heard,
And vaunting navies disappeared;
Through clouds of smoke sparks widely flew,
And hissing rafts the shore bestrew;
Some on Punic sands were cast,
And Carthage was avenged at last.
Alas! how fallen art thou since,
O Syracuse! how many a prince
Of Gallia's party-colored brood
Have crept o'er thee to suck thy blood!
Syracuse! raise again thy head,
Long hast thou slept, but art not dead.
A late avenger now is come
Whose voice alone can split the tomb.
Hearest thou not the world throughout
Cry Garibaldi? One loud shout
Arises, and there needs but one
To shatter a polluted throne.

Walter Savage Landor.

Taranto (*Tarentum*).

TARENTUM.

AND next Tarentum's bay,
Named, if report be true, from Hercules,
Is seen; and opposite lifts up her head

The goddess of Lacinia; and the heights
Appear of Caulon, and the dangerous rocks
Of Sylaceum. Then far off we see
Trinacrian Ætna rising from the waves;
And now we hear the ocean's awful roar,
The breakers dashing on the rocks, the moan
Of broken voices on the shore. The deeps
Leap up, and sand is mixed with boiling foam.
"Charybdis!" cries Anchises; "lo, the cliffs,
The dreadful rocks that Helenus foretold!
Save us, — bear off, my men! With equal stroke
Bend on your oars!" No sooner said than done.
With groaning rudder Palinurus turns
The prow to the left, and the whole cohort strain
With oar and sail, and seek a southern course.
The curving wave one moment lifts us up
Skyward, then sinks us down as in the shades
Of death. Three times amid their hollow caves
The cliffs resound; three times we saw the foam
Dashed, — that the stars hung dripping wet with dew.
Meanwhile, abandoned by the wind and sun,
Weary, and ignorant of our course, we are thrown
Upon the Cyclops' shore.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

Terni.

THE FALLS OF TERNI.

THE roar of waters! — from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice:
The fall of waters! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss:
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture; while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald. How profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which downward, worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,

With many windings through the vale; — look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread, — a matchless cataract,

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dyes, while all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

Lord Byron.

THE FALLS OF TERNI.

A GORGE cleft through the mountain's mighty heart:
Volcanic throes within her breast we hear,
Or pent-up winds, or earth's spasmodic start?
No, 't is the cleaving Terni's wild career;
On, where yon clouds like shrouded giants rear
Their shapes in azure distance, while the swell
Of the strife gathering on the startled ear
The sounds of their eternal conflict tell,
oud as o'er distant storms the thunder's sinking knell.

Lo! hurrying on enwreathed in mist and foam,
His robes caught upward in delirious flight,

Velino rushes from his mountain home,
In beauty and in terror, from yon height
One desperate bound hath hurled him, flashing might
And wrath and madness from his skyey throne
Shot like a flying minister of light;
High o'er the whirlpool wreck his crown is shown
Forever hovering there in glittering state alone;

A glory haloing his ruin; there
Tortured and writhing in the abyss he lies,
Yet on his shivered forehead he doth bear
The flickering hues and light of his lost skies;
Behold in eddying wreaths how o'er him rise
The smoke, the reek, the steam of his wild breath,
And the gleam flashed forth from his arrowy eyes,
How lend they darkening 'gainst the mountain heath,
A horror to the scene, that war of life and death!

John Edmund Reade.

Thrasimene, the Lake.

THRASIMENE.

I ROAM
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,

Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swollen to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scattered o'er,

Like to a forest felled by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that beneath the fray
An earthquake reeled unheededly away!
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding-sheet;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet!

The earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to eternity; they saw
The ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel; Nature's law,
In them suspended, recked not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain
Lay where their roots are; but a brook hath ta'en,
A little rill of scanty stream and bed —

A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turned the unwilling waters red.

Lord Byron.

LINES

WRITTEN AT THE VILLAGE OF PASSIGNANO, ON THE LAKE OF THRASIMENE.

THE mountains stand about the quiet lake,
That not a breath its azure calm may break;
No leaf of these sere olive-trees is stirred,
In the near silence far-off sounds are heard;
The tiny bat is flitting overhead;
The hawthorn doth its richest odors shed
Into the dewy air; and over all,
Veil after veil, the evening shadows fall,
Withdrawing one by one each glimmering height,
The far, and then the nearer, from our sight, —
No sign surviving in this tranquil scene,
That strife and savage tumult here have been.

But if the pilgrim to the latest plain
Of carnage, where the blood like summer rain
Fell but the other day, — if in his mind
He marvels much and oftentimes to find
With what success has Nature each sad trace
Of man's red footmarks labored to efface, —
What wonder, if this spot we tread appears
Guiltless of strife, when now two thousand years
Of daily reparation have gone by,

Since it resumed its own tranquillity?
This calm has nothing strange, yet not the less
This holy evening's solemn quietness,
The perfect beauty of this windless lake,
This stillness which no harsher murmurs break
Than the frogs croaking from the distant sedge,
These vineyards dressed unto the water's edge,
This hind that homeward driving the slow steer
Tells how man's daily work goes forward here,
Have each a power upon me while I drink
The influence of the placid time, and think
How gladly that sweet Mother once again
Resumes her sceptre and benignant reign,
But for a few short instants scared away
By the mad game, the cruel, impious fray
Of her distempered children, — how comes back,
And leads them in the customary track
Of blessing once again; to order brings
Anew the dislocated frame of things,
And covers up, and out of sight conceals
What they have wrought of ill, or gently heals.

Richard Chenevix Trench.

THRASIMENE.

THE azure Thrasimene! how the name
Calls up the quickened life-blood to the heart:
Visions of fight and old heroic fame
Before the mind's eye into being start,
Deeds which their inspiration still impart:
Here fell the Romans' eagle wings outspread

Struck in the tempest by the ethereal dart;
Here valor sunk, his blood like water shed,
Dying upon his foes, the Roman never fled.

All strife was vain, the darkening mists rolled down,
Blinding them trampled on the marshy strand,
While the foe rushed from yon hill's sunlit crown,
Front, flank, and rear on the devoted band;
Vain their wild rally, vainer still their stand:
Yet frantic courage hewed its desperate way
To where yon ridge's triple heights expand:
Conquered and conqueror's dust have passed away,
But that once blood-dyed stream records the dreadful day.

John Edmund Reade.

THRASYMENE.

IS this the spot where Rome's eternal foe
Into his snares the mighty legions drew,
Whence from the carnage, spiritless and few,
A remnant scarcely reached her gates of woe?
Is this the stream, thus gliding soft and slow,
That, from the gushing wounds of thousands, grew
So fierce a flood, that waves of crimson hue
Rushed on the bosom of the lake below?
The mountains that gave back the battle-cry
Are silent now; — perchance yon hillocks green
Mark where the bones of those old warriors lie!
Heaven never gladdened a more peaceful scene;
Never left softer breeze a fairer sky
To sport upon thy waters, Thrasymene.

Charles Strong.

THRASYMENE.

HANNIBAL. Let the valleys ring
With triumph and with terror, all is ours.
Here in the earth their swords have made their own,
Bury our officers with solemn rites;
And, while the tears of Carthage and of Spain
Mourn brave Zacantho, and brave Acron, dead,
We keep their memories.

SOSILUS. While their bodies rust
And grow incorporate with Italian soil,
Let the gray olives glisten, vineyards shed
The grape above their tombs; let evening waves
Murmur their dirges in the waning light,
And morning suns of many centuries
Recall their glory. Here shall shepherds tell
To passing travellers, when we are dust,
How, by the shores of reedy Thrasymene,
We fought and conquered, while the earthquake shook
The walls of Rome.

John Nichol.

Tiber, the River.

THE TIBER.

THE sea was flushing in the morning's rays,
And from the ethereal heights Aurora's car
With rose and saffron gleamed; when suddenly
The winds were stilled, and every breath of air,

And the oars struggled through the sluggish sea.
And here Æneas from the deep descries
A spacious grove. Through this the Tiber pours
His smiling waves along, with rapid whirls,
And yellow sand, and bursts into the sea.
And all around and overhead were birds
Of various hues, accustomed to the banks
And river-bed; from tree to tree they flew,
Soothing the air with songs. Then to the land
He bids the crews direct the vessels' prows,
And joyfully the shadowy river gains.

* * *

All through that night the Tiber calmed his flood,
And, ebbing backward, stood with tranquil waves,
Smoothing its surface like a placid lake,
That without struggling oars the ships might glide.
So on their way they speed with joyous shouts.
Along the waters slip the well-tarred keels;
The waves with wonder gaze, and from afar
The woods, unused to such a sight, admire
Upon the stream the heroes' glittering shields
And painted vessels. Night and day their oars
They ply, pass the long bending river's curves;
And through green shades of overhanging trees
They pierce, along the tranquil waters borne.
The fiery sun had reached his noonday height,
When from afar they see a citadel,
And walls, and scattered houses here and there;
Which now Rome matches with the skies, but then
Evander's small and humble town. Then swift
They turn their prows, and near the city's walls.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

TO THE TIBER.

TIBER! my early dream,
My boyhood's vision of thy classic stream,
Had taught my mind to think
That over sands of gold
Thy limpid waters rolled,
And ever-verdant laurels grew upon thy brink.

But in far other guise
The rude reality hath met mine eyes:
Here, seated on thy bank,
All desolate and drear
Thy margin doth appear,
With creeping weeds, and shrubs, and vegetation rank.

Fondly I fancied thine
The wave pellucid, and the Naiad's shrine,
In crystal grot below;
But thy tempestuous course
Runs turbulent and hoarse,
And, swelling with wild wrath, thy wintry waters flow.

Upon thy bosom dark,
Peril awaits the light, confiding bark,
In eddying vortex swamped;
Foul, treacherous, and deep,
Thy winding waters sweep,
Enveloping their prey in dismal ruin prompt.

Fast in thy bed is sunk
The mountain pine-tree's broken trunk,
Aimed at the galley's keel;
And well thy wave can waft
Upon that broken shaft
The barge, whose shattered wreck thy bosom will conceal.

The dog-star's sultry power,
The summer heat, the noontide's fervid hour,
That fires the mantling blood,
Yon cautious swain can't urge
To tempt thy dangerous surge,
Or cool his limbs within thy dark, insidious flood.

I've marked thee in thy pride,
When struggle fierce thy disemboguing tide
With Ocean's monarch held;
But quickly overcome
By Neptune's masterdom,
Back thou hast fled as oft, ingloriously repelled.

Often athwart the fields
A giant's strength thy flood redundant wields,
Bursting above its brims, —
Strength that no dike can check;
Dire is the harvest-wreck!
Buoyant, with lofty horns, the affrighted bullock swims.

But still thy proudest boast,
Tiber, and what brings honor to thee most

Is, that thy waters roll
Fast by the eternal home
Of Glory's daughter, Rome;
And that thy billows bathe the sacred Capitol.

Famed is thy stream for her,
Clœlia, thy current's virgin conqueror;
And him who stemmed the march
Of Tuscany's proud host,
When, firm at honor's post,
He waved his blood-stained blade above the broken arch.

Of Romulus the sons
To torrid Africans, to frozen Huns,
Have taught thy name, O flood!
And to that utmost verge
Where radiantly emerge
Apollo's car of flame and golden-footed stud.

For so much glory lent,
Ever destructive of some monument,
Thou makest foul return;
Insulting with thy wave
Each Roman hero's grave,
And Scipio's dust that fills yon consecrated urn!

Alessandro Guidi. Tr. Anon.

TO THE TIBER.

HAIL, sacred stream, whose waters roll
Immortal through the classic page!
To thee the Muse-devoted soul,
Though destined to a later age
And less indulgent clime, to thee,
Nor thou disdain, in Runic lays
Weak mimic of true harmony,
His grateful homage pays.
Far other strains thine elder ear
With pleased attention wont to hear,
When he who strung the Latian lyre,
And he who led the Aonian quire
From Mantua's reedy lakes with osiers crowned,
Taught Echo from thy banks with transport to resound.
Thy banks? — alas! is this the boasted scene,
This dreary, wide, uncultivated plain,
Where sickening Nature wears a fainter green,
And Desolation spreads her torpid reign?
Is this the scene where Freedom breathed,
Her copious horn where Plenty wreathed,
And Health at opening day
Bade all her roseate breezes fly,
To wake the sons of Industry,
And make their fields more gay?

Where is the villa's rural pride,
The swelling dome's imperial gleam?

Which loved to grace thy verdant side,
And tremble in thy golden stream?
Where are the bold, the busy throngs,
That rushed impatient to the war,
Or tuned to peace triumphal songs,
And hailed the passing car?
Along the solitary road,
The eternal flint by consuls trod,
We muse, and mark the sad decays
Of mighty works and mighty days!
For these vile wastes, we cry, had Fate decreed
That Veii's sons should strive, for these Camillus bleed?
Did here, in after-times of Roman pride,
The musing shepherd from Soracte's height
See towns extend where'er thy waters glide,
And temples rise, and peopled farms unite?
They did. For this deserted plain
The hero strove, nor strove in vain;
And here the shepherd saw
Unnumbered towns and temples spread,
While Rome majestic reared her head,
And gave the nations law.

Yes, thou and Latium once were great.
And still, ye first of human things,
Beyond the grasp of time or fate
Her fame and thine triumphant springs.
What though the mouldering columns fall,
And strew the desert earth beneath,
Though ivy round each nodding wall
Entwine its fatal wreath,

Yet say, can Rhine or Danube boast
The numerous glories thou hast lost?
Can even Euphrates' palmy shore,
Or Nile, with all his mystic lore,
Produce from old records of genuine fame
Such heroes, poets, kings, or emulate thy name?
Even now the Muse, the conscious Muse, is here;
From every ruin's formidable shade
Eternal music breathes on Fancy's ear,
And wakes to more than form the illustrious dead.
Thy Cæsars, Scipios, Catos, rise
The great, the virtuous, and the wise,
In solemn state advance!
They fix the philosophic eye,
Or trail the robe, or lift on high
The lightning of the lance.

But chief that humbler, happier train
Who knew those virtues to reward
Beyond the reach of chance or pain
Secure, the historian and the bard.
By them the hero's generous rage
Still warm in youth immortal lives;
And in their adamantine page
Thy glory still survives.
Through deep savannahs wild and vast,
Unheard, unknown, through ages past,
Beneath the sun's directer beams
What copious torrents pour their streams!
No fame have they, no fond pretence to mourn,
No annals swell their pride or grace their storied urn.

Whilst thou, with Rome's exalted genius joined,
Her spear yet lifted, and her corselet braced,
Canst tell the waves, canst tell the passing wind
Thy wondrous tale, and cheer the listening waste.
Though from his caves the unfeeling North
Poured all his legioned tempests forth,
Yet still thy laurels bloom;
One deathless glory still remains,
Thy stream has rolled through Latian plains,
Has washed the walls of Rome.

William Whitehead.

THE RIVER TIBER.

TIBER is beautiful, too, and the orchard slopes, and the Anio
Falling, falling yet, to the ancient lyrical cadence;
Tiber and Anio's tide; and cool from Lucretilis ever,
With the Digentian stream, and with the Bandusian fountain,
Folded in Sabine recesses, the valley and villa of Horace:
So not seeing I sung; so seeing and listening say I,
Here, as I sit by the stream, as I gaze at the cell of the Sibyl,
Here with Albunea's home and the grove of Tiburnus beside me;
Tivoli beautiful is, and musical, O Teverone,
Dashing from mountain to plain, thy parted impetuous waters!
Tivoli's waters and rocks; and fair under Monte Gennaro

(Haunt even yet, I must think, as I wander and gaze,
of the shadows,
Faded and pale, yet immortal, of Faunus, the Nymphs,
and the Graces),
Fair in itself, and yet fairer with human completing
creations,
Folded in Sabine recesses the valley and villa of Hor-
ace:
So not seeing I sung; so now, nor seeing nor hearing,
Neither by waterfall lulled, nor folded in sylvan em-
braces,
Neither by cell of the Sibyl, nor stepping the Monte
Gennaro,
Seated on Anio's bank, nor sipping Bandusian waters,
But on Montorio's height, looking down on the tile-
clad streets, the
Cupolas, crosses, and domes, the bushes and kitchen-
gardens,
Which, by the grace of the Tiber, proclaim themselves
Rome of the Romans.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

THE TIBER.

CASSIUS. I was born free as Cæsar, so were you;
We both have fed as well; and we can both
Endure the winter's cold as well as he.
For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
The troubled Tyber chafing with her shores,
Cæsar said to me, "Dar'st thou, Cassius, now
Leap in with me into this angry flood,

And swim to yonder point?" Upon the word,
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in,
And bade him follow: so, indeed, he did.
The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy:
But, ere we could arrive the point propos'd,
Cæsar cried, "Help me, Cassius, or I sink!"
I, as Æneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tyber
Did I the tired Cæsar. And this man
Is now become a god; and Cassius is
A wretched creature, and must bend his body,
If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.

William Shakespeare.

Ticino, the River.

THE RIVER TICINO.

SMOOTH and untroubled the Ticinus flows,
And through the crystal stream the shining bottom shows;
Scarce can the sight discover if it moves,
So wondrous slow amidst the shady groves,
And tuneful birds that warble on its sides,
Within its gloomy banks the limpid liquor glides.

Silius Italicus. Tr. Joseph Addison.

Tivoli.

A DAY AT TIVOLI.

THAT past is here; where old Tiburtus found
Mere mountain-brow, and fenced with walls around,
And for his wearied Argives reared a home,
Long ere yon seven proud hills had dreamed of Rome.
'T is here, amid these patriarch olive-trees,
Which Flaccus saw, or ancestry of these;
Oft musing, as he slowly strayed him past,
How here his quiet age should close at last.
And here behold them still! Like ancient seers
They stand; the dwellers of a thousand years,
Deep-furrowed, strangely crooked, and ashy-gray,
As ghost might gleam beneath the touch of day.
All strangely perforate, too; with rounded eyes,
That ever scan the traveller as he hies:
Fit guardians of the spot they seem to be,
With centuries seen, and centuries yet to see.

Who treads this pallid grove, by moonlight pale,
Might half believe the peasant's spectre tale
Of Latian heroes old, that come to glide
Along these silent paths at even-tide;
Or Sibyl, wan with ghastly prophecy,
From her near fane, as whilom, wandering by.

But morning, now, and sunny vines are here,
From tree to tree gay-gadding without fear;

Or else in verdant rope their fibres string,
As if to tempt the little Loves to swing;
Or, tricking silvery head and wrinkled stem
With tendril-curl or leafy diadem;
A sportive war of graceful contrast wage,
The Grave and Gay, green Youth and hoary Age.

Hence we may feel resounding Anio's shock,
As his full river thunders from his rock.
Yet mark! meanwhile adown its own small dell
How falls or winds each little cascatelle.
With no rude sound, with no impetuous rush,
But blandly, fondly, or by bank or bush,
Or floats in air, as when mild mermaid frees
(Or so they feign) her tresses to the breeze,
And, careless for a while of coral bower,
Basks on the sunny sands till noontide's scorching hour.

* * *

John Kenyon.

TIVOLI.

MIDST Tivoli's luxuriant glades,
Bright-foaming falls, and olive shades,
Where dwelt, in days departed long,
The sons of battle and of song,
No tree, no shrub, its foliage rears;
But o'er the wrecks of other years,
Temples and domes, which long have been
The soil of that enchanted scene.

There the wild fig-tree and the vine
O'er Hadrian's mouldering villa twine;

The cypress, in funereal grace,
Usurps the vanished column's place;
O'er fallen shrine and ruined frieze
The wall-flower rustles in the breeze;
Acanthus leaves the marble hide
They once adorned in sculptured pride,
And Nature hath resumed her throne
O'er the vast works of ages flown.

Was it for this that many a pile,
Pride of Ilissus and of Nile,
To Anio's banks the image lent
Of each imperial monument?
Now Athens weeps her shattered fanes,
Thy temples, Egypt, strew thy plains;
And the proud fabrics Hadrian reared
From Tiber's vale have disappeared.
We need no prescient sibyl there
The doom of grandeur to declare;
Each stone, where weeds and ivy climb,
Reveals some oracle of time;
Each relic utters Fate's decree, —
The future as the past shall be.

Halls of the dead! in Tiber's vale
Who now shall tell your lofty tale?
Who trace the high patrician's dome,
The bard's retreat, the hero's home?
When moss-clad wrecks alone record
There dwelt the world's departed lord,
In scenes where verdure's rich array

Still sheds young beauty or decay,
And sunshine on each glowing hill
Midst ruins finds a dwelling still.

Sunk is thy palace, but thy tomb,
Hadrian! hath shared a prouder doom.
Though vanished with the days of old
Its pillars of Corinthian mould;
Though the fair forms by sculpture wrought,
Each bodying some immortal thought,
Which o'er that temple of the dead
Serene but solemn beauty shed,
Have found, like glory's self, a grave
In time's abyss or Tiber's wave;
Yet dreams more lofty and more fair
Than Art's bold hand hath imaged e'er,
High thoughts of many a mighty mind
Expanding when all else declined,
In twilight years, when only they
Recalled the radiance passed away,
Have made that ancient pile their home,
Fortress of freedom and of Rome.

Felicia Hemans.

TIVOLI.

SPIRIT! who lovest to live unseen,
By brook or pathless dell,
Where wild woods burst the rocks between
And floods, in streams of silver sheen,
Gush from their flinty cell!

Or where the ivy waves her woof,
And climbs the crag alone,
Haunts the cool grotto, daylight proof,
Where loitering drops that wear the roof
Turn all beneath to stone.

Shield me from summer's blaze of day,
From noontide's fiery gale,
And, as thy waters round me play,
Beneath the o'ershadowing cavern lay,
Till twilight spreads her veil.

Then guide me where the wandering moon
Rests on Mæcenas' wall,
And echoes at night's solemn noon
In Tivoli's soft shades attune
The peaceful waterfall.

Again they float before my sight
The bower, the flood, the glade;
Again on yon romantic height
The Sibyl's temple towers in light,
Above the dark cascade.

Down the steep cliff I wind my way
Along the dim retreat,
And mid the torrents' deafening bray
Dash from my brow the foam away,
Where clashing cataracts meet.

And now I leave the rocks below,
And, issuing forth from night,

View on the flakes that sunward flow,
A thousand rainbows round me glow,
And arch my way with light.

Again the myrtles o'er me breathe,
Fresh flowers my path perfume,
Round cliff and cave wild tendrils wreathe,
And from the groves that bend beneath
Low trail their purple bloom.

Thou grove, thou glade of Tivoli,
Dark flood and rivulet clear,
That wind, where'er you wander by,
A stream of beauty on the eye,
Of music on the ear;

And thou that, when the wandering moon
Illumed the rocky dell,
Didst to my charmed ear attune
The echoes of night's solemn noon, —
Spirit unseen! farewell!

Farewell! — o'er many a realm I go,
My natal isle to greet,
Where summer sunbeams mildly glow,
And sea-winds health and freshness blow
O'er freedom's hallowed seat.

Yet there, to thy romantic spot
Shall fancy oft retire,
And hail the bower, the stream, the grot,
Where earth's sole lord the world forgot,
And Horace smote the lyre.

William Sotheby.

THE SIREN'S CAVE AT TIVOLI.

AS o'er the chasm I breathless hung,
Thus from the depths the Siren sung:
"Down, down into the womb,
Of earth, the daylight's tomb,
Where the sun's eyes
Never may shine,
Nor fair moon rise
With smile divine;
Where caverns yawn
Black as despair,
Fatally drawn
I plunge down there;
And with the bound
The rocks resound,
And round and round
My waves are wound
Into the gaping rifts of the mid earth:
O for the sunny springs where I took birth!
The gentle rills,
The tiny brimming fountain,
That, scooped in the warm bosom of the mountain,
Each May shower overfills!
Whence I and my fair sister came; and she
Rolls her smooth silver flood along the way,
That princes made for her, so royally,
Piercing the rock to give her ample sway.

Down the bright sunny steep
Her waters leap,
Myrtle and bay and laurel and wild vine,
A garland for her flowing tresses twine!
The green moss stars the rocks whereon she leaps,
Over her breast the fragrant locust weeps;
The air resounds with her wild shouts of laughter,
The echoes of the hills in chorus after
Repeat the sound, and in her silvery spray
Rainbows are woven by the light of day!
Down in the valley she springs
And sings,
And the sky bends over
Her, like a lover;
And glittering and sparkling her waters run,
A bright sea of snow in the summer sun!

Darkness broods over me the while;
Grim rocks that sweat
With my cold clammy spray,
As down the hopeless way
In one wild jet
My tortured billows lash and leap and boil;
So deep my bed of darkness lies,
That scarce the voice of my great agony
Reaches the skies,
And all ye see
With fearful eyes
Who question me,
Is the gray whirling mist that covers all
As with a pall.

Light! light upon the rocks! sudden and fierce
The sharp flames pierce;
Glaring upon my water
Like the blood-hue of slaughter
A red torch flashes;
As down my wild flood dashes
Wide flaring brightness streams upon my foam,
And flaming fire-wreaths come
Hissing into my waves to find their doom
In the same blackness that devours me.
The huge rocks grin, as with a sudden glee,
At this strange visitation of the light,
And they are made not beautiful, but bright,
As all their horrid piles and masses show,
Hanging above, and heaped below,
Searched by the ruddy glow.
O, let me still in darkness dwell!
Not in this hell
Of lurid light,
That scares the night,
Hence with the leaping glare,
Whose fiery stare
Reveals the secrets of my dismal bed;
Hence with the voices that profane the dread
Of my dark chambers!" — thus the Siren cried,
As o'er the rocky chasm's black, hideous side
I hung entranced with terror and dismay;
And at that piteous cry I fled away.

Frances Anne Kemble.

TIVOLI.

AND where breathes Nature deeper oracles
Than in thy depths, romantic Tivoli!
Here, where the spirit of past ages dwells,
Lulled by the waters' voice of prophecy,
Endiademed with craggy majesty,
And plumed with woods that shed a horror round?
From the deep olive grove lift up thine eye;
Lo, on yon airy cliff's extremest bound
The Sibyl's temple reared against the blue profound;

Where the wrecked image of the beautiful,
Conscious of faded hues and felt decline,
Looks down an eloquence that doth o'errule
The heart far more than language, though divine
Were he who spake; full swells the flowing line
Of light and delicate proportion there;
Time's gray tints mellowing that ruined shrine,
Impart a speaking sadness to its air,
A venerable grace that doth his wrongs repair.

John Edmund Reade.

TIVOLI.

THE fires of Vesta's temple sleep,
That crowns the perforated steep;
But the dim world of pagan lore
The museful soul entrances o'er:
With shiver pierce we Neptune's cave,

In grim recess doth Sibyl rave,
Sharp tossing back with gloomy ire
Her tresses scorched by eye of fire.
And, but for gaudy, whitewashed cell,
Where folks their wayside prayers may tell,
Where Virgin, daubed on plastered wall,
Smiles from behind wax tapers small,
And but for Cross, that meek sign, fraught
With wondrous truths, to man since taught,
Enthusiastic, one might feign
A life mid the old gods again,
Beneath the jocund sway of Pan,
And all the marbled dreams of man.

See there arise in memory's pride,
Bosomed upon the far hillside
The villa-homes of mirth and song,
Once filled by many a courtly throng;
Where Time, some idle feathers shed,
Sits spell-bound dreaming o'er the dead:
Catullus! Horace! Patron sweet!
Whom their bright strains were wont to greet,
Mecænas! by what wondrous doom
Those gay retreats live now your tomb,
More durable than kings have made,
With sceptred glories bright inlaid.

* * *

Through Adrian's palace let us stray,
And mark each slippery wall's decay,
The crumbling bath, the cellar bare,

The hueless fresco rotting there;
Whilst strange, exotic plants are found
Neglected shooting from the ground;
Ere yet those halls of rich delight
Were finished in the sun's proud light
By their Imperial lord's command,
From every distant conquered land,
And Eastern shore, luxurious brought; —
O lesson strangely, simply taught!
Nature to them, in sport and glee,
New slender life doth still decree,
Art's stern magnificence around
Falls silent, tomb-like, to the ground.

Anonymous.

Torcello, the Island.

THE ISLAND OF TORCELLO.

HOW pretty this! The waters seek
So wooingly this bosky creek;
How lovingly the moonlight falls
On leafy cliff and cottage walls!
How all its peaks and edges glimmer,
And all its myrtles softly shimmer;
Reared of shadows and of light,
Sweet creation of the night!
From the rock's projecting crest,
Venturous as a martlet's nest,

The cot o'erhangs the water's breast.
Nets are clinging on the wall,
Spars and tackling loosely lie,
And the patched boat high and dry,
Gaff and anchor rusted all;
O'er the waters softly swelling,
This thread of light, so pure and shy,
Seaward slanting from on high,
Glimmers from a fisher's dwelling.

Anonymous.

TORCELLO.

I DO recall some sad days spent,
By borders of the Orient,
Days sweet as sad to memory —
'T would make a tale. It matters not —
I sought the loneliest seas; I sought
The solitude of ruins, and forgot
Mine own lone life and littleness
Before this fair land's mute distress,
That sat within this changeful sea.

Slow sailing through the reedy isles,
By unknown banks, through unknown bays,
Some sunny summer yesterdays,
Where Nature's beauty still beguiles,
I saw the storied yellow sail
And lifted prow of steely mail.
'T is all that 's left Torcello now, —
A pirate's yellow sail, a prow.

Below the far, faint peaks of snow,
And grass-grown causeways well below,
I touched Torcello.
Once a-land,
I took a sea-shell in my hand,
And blew like any trumpeter.
I felt the fig-leaves lift and stir
On trees that reached from ruined wall
Above my head, but that was all.
Back from the farther island shore
Came echoes trooping; nothing more.

Lo! here stood Adria once, and here
Attila came with sword and flame,
And set his throne of hollowed stone
In her high mart.
And it remains
Still lord o'er all. Where once the tears
Of mute petition fell, the rains
Of heaven fall. Lo! all alone
There lifts this massive empty throne!
The sea has changed his meed, his mood,
And made this sedgy solitude.

By cattle-paths grass-grown and worn,
Through marbled streets all stained and torn
By time and battle, there I walked.
A bent old beggar, white as one
For better fruitage blossoming,
Came on. And as he came he talked
Unto himself; for there are none

In all his island, old and dim,
To answer back or question him.

I turned, retraced my steps once more.
The hot miasma steamed and rose
In deadly vapor from the reeds
That grew from out the shallow shore,
Where peasants say the sea-horse feeds,
And Neptune shapes his horn and blows.

I climbed and sat that throne of stone
To contemplate, to dream, to reign,
Ay, reign above myself; to call
The people of the past again
Before me as I sat alone
In all my kingdom.
There were kine
That browsed along the reedy brine,
And now and then a tusky boar
Would shake the high reeds of the shore,
A bird blows by — but that was all.

I watched the lonesome sea-gull pass.
I did remember and forget;
The past rolled by; I stood alone.
I sat the shapely chiselled stone
That stands in tall sweet grasses set;
Ay, girdle deep in long strong grass,
And green Alfalfa.
Very fair
The heavens were, and still and blue,

For Nature knows no changes there.
The Alps of Venice, far away
Like some half-risen half-moon lay.

How sweet the grasses at my feet!
The smell of clover over sweet.
I heard the hum of bees. The bloom
Of clover-tops and cherry-trees
Were being rifled by the bees,
And these were building in a tomb.

The fair Alfalfa; such as has
Usurped the Occident, and grows
With all the sweetness of the rose
On Sacramento's sundown hills,
Is there, and that mid island fills
With fragrance. Yet the smell of death
Comes riding in on every breath.

Lo! death that is not death, but rest:
To step aside, to watch and wait
Beside the wave, outside the gate,
With all life's pulses in your breast;
To absolutely rest, to pray
In some lone mountain while you may.

That sad, sweet fragrance. It had sense
And sound and voice. It was a part
Of that which had possessed my heart,
And would not of my will go hence.

'T was Autumn's breath; 't was dear as kiss
Of any worshipped woman is.

Some snails have climbed the throne and writ
Their silver monograms on it
In unknown tongues.
I sat thereon,
I dreamed until the day was gone;
I blew again my pearly shell, —
Blew long and strong, and loud and well;
I puffed my cheeks, I blew, as when
Horned satyrs danced the delight of men.

Some mouse-brown cows that fed within
Looked up. A cowherd rose hard by,
My single subject, clad in skin,
Nor yet half clad. I caught his eye,
He stared at me, then turned and fled.
He frightened fled, and as he ran,
Like wild beast from the face of man,
Across his shoulder threw his head.
He gathered up his skin of goat
About his breast and hairy throat.
He stopped, and then this subject true,
Mine only one in hands like these
Made desolate by changeful seas,
Came back and asked me for a sou.

Joaquin Miller.

TORCELLO AGAIN.

AND yet again through the watery miles
Of reeds I rowed till the desolate isles
Of the black bead-makers of Venice are not.
I touched where a single sharp tower is shot
To heaven, and torn by thunder and rent
As if it had been Time's battlement.
A city lies dead, and this great gravestone
Stands at its head like a ghost alone.

Some cherry-trees grow here, and here
An old church, simple and severe
In ancient aspect, stands alone
Amid the ruin and decay, all grown
In moss and grasses. Old and quaint,
With antique cuts of martyred saint,
The gray church stands with stooping knees,
Defying the decay of seas.

Her pictured Hell, with flames blown high,
In bright mosaics wrought and set
When man first knew the Nubian art,
Her bearded saints, as black as jet;
Her quaint Madonna, dim with rain
And touch of pious lips of pain,
So touched my lonesome soul, that I
Gazed long, then came and gazed again,
And loved, and took her to my heart.

Nor monk in black, nor Capuchin,
Nor priest of any creed was seen.
A sun-browned woman, old and tall,
And still as any shadow is,
Stole forth from out the mossy wall
With massive keys, to show me this;
Came slowly forth, and following,
Three birds, and all with drooping wing.

Three mute brown babes of hers; and they,—
O, they were beautiful as sleep,
Or death, below the troubled deep.
And on the pouting lips of these
Red corals of the silent seas,
Sweet birds, the everlasting seal
Of silence that the God has set
On this dead island sits for aye.

I would forget, yet not forget,
Their helpless eloquence. They creep
Somehow into my heart, and keep
One bleak, cold corner, jewel set.
They steal my better self away
To them, as little birds that day
Stole fruits from out the cherry-trees.

So helpless and so wholly still,
So sad, so wrapped in mute surprise,
That I did love, despite my will.
One little maid of ten — such eyes,
So large and lonely, so divine,

Such pouting lips, such peachy cheek —
Did lift her perfect eyes to mine,
Until our souls did touch and speak;
Stood by me all that perfect day,
Yet not one sweet word could she say.

She turned her melancholy eyes
So constant to my own, that I
Forgot the going clouds, the sky,
Found fellowship, took bread and wine,
And so her little soul and mine
Stood very near together there.
And O, I found her very fair.
Yet not one soft word could she say;
What did she think of all that day?

The sometime song of gondolier
Is heard afar. The fishermen
Betimes draw net by ruined shore,
In full spring-time when east-winds fall;
Then traders row with muffled oar,
Tedesco or the turbaned Turk,
The pirate, at some midnight work
By watery wall, — but that is all.

Joaquin Miller.

TORCELLO.

SHORT sail from Venice sad Torcello lies,
Deserted island, low and still and green.
Before fair Venice was a bride and queen
Torcello's court was held in fairer guise
Than Doges knew. To-day death-vapors rise
From fields where once her palaces were seen,
And in her silent towers that crumbling lean
Unterrified the brooding swallow flies.
O once-loved friend, who dost in vain implore
My presence, thou art like Torcello's land.
Thy wasted life to me seems life no more.
With all its beauty death goes hand in hand,
I shrink from thee, as on its blighted strand
Torcello's ghosts might turn and fly the shore.

Helen Hunt.

Trapani (*Drepanum*).

ON A CORPSE WASHED ASHORE.

NOT rugged Trachis hides these whitening bones,
Nor that black isle whose name its color shows,
But the wild beach, o'er which, with ceaseless moans,
The vexed Icarian wave, eternal, flows,
Of Drepanum — ill-famèd promontory —
And there, instead of hospitable rites,
The long grass sweeping tells his fate's sad story
To rude tribes gathered from the neighboring heights.

Uncertain. Tr. J. H. Merivale.

Val d' Arno.

AN EVENING PICTURE.

WHERE three huge dogs are ramping yonder,
Before that villa with its tower,
No braver boys, no father fonder,
Ever prolonged the moonlight hour.

Often to watch their sports unseen,
Along the broad stone bench he lies,
The oleander-stems between,
And citron boughs to shade his eyes.

The clouds now whiten far away,
And villas glimmer thick below,
And windows catch the quivering ray,
Obscure one minute's space ago.

Orchards and vine-knolls maple-propped
Rise radiant round; the meads are dim,
As if the milky-way had dropped
And filled Valdarno to the brim.

Unseen beneath us, on the right,
The abbey with unfinished front
Of checkered marble, black and white,
And on the left the Doccia's font.

Eastward, two ruined castles rise
Beyond Maiano's mossy mill,

Winter and Time their enemies,
Without their warder, stately still.

The heaps around them there will grow
Higher, as years sweep by, and higher
Till every battlement laid low
Is seized and trampled by the brier.

That line so lucid is the weir
Of Rorezzano; but behold
The graceful tower of Giotto there,
And Duomo's cross of freshened gold.

We cannot tell, so far away,
Whether the city's tongue be mute,
We only hear some lover play
(If sighs be play) the sighing flute.

Walter Savage Landor.

VAL D' ARNO.

WELL pleased, could we pursue
The Arno from his birthplace in the clouds,
So near the yellow Tiber's, — springing up
From his four fountains on the Apennine,
That mountain-ridge a sea-mark to the ships
Sailing on either sea. Downward he runs,
Scattering fresh verdure through the desolate wild,
Down by the City of Hermits, and the woods
That only echo to the choral hymn;
Then through these gardens to the Tuscan Sea,

Reflecting castles, convents, villages,
And those great rivals in an elder day,
Florence and Pisa, — who have given him fame,
Fame everlasting, but who stained so oft
His troubled waters.

Samuel Rogers.

Vallombrosa.

VALLOMBROSA.

THICK as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades,
High overarched, embower.

John Milton.

VALLOMBROSA.

AND Vallombrosa, we two went to see
Last June, beloved companion, — where sublime
The mountains live in holy families,
And the slow pine-woods ever climb and climb
Half up their breasts; just stagger as they seize
Some gray crag, — drop back with it many a time,
And straggle blindly down the precipice!
The Vallombrosan brooks were strewn as thick
That June-day, knee-deep, with dead beechen leaves,
As Milton saw them ere his heart grew sick,
And his eyes blind. I think the monks and beeves
Are all the same too: scarce they have changed the wick

On good St. Gualbert's altar, which receives
The convent's pilgrims; and the pool in front
Wherein the hill-stream trout are cast, to wait
The beatific vision, and the grunt
Used at refectory, keeps its weedy state,
To baffle saintly abbots, who would count
The fish across their breviary, nor 'bate
The measure of their steps. O waterfalls
And forests! sound and silence! mountains bare,
That leap up, peak by peak, and catch the palls
Of purple and silver mist, to rend and share
With one another, at electric calls
Of life in the sunbeams, — till we cannot dare
Fix your shapes, learn your number! we must think
Your beauty and your glory helped to fill
The cup of Milton's soul so to the brink,
That he no more was thirsty when God's will
Had shattered to his sense the last chain-link
By which he drew from Nature's visible
The fresh well-water. Satisfied by this,
He sang of Adam's Paradise and smiled,
Remembering Vallombrosa. Therefore is
The place divine to English man and child; —
We all love Italy.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

BRUSHWOOD.

ON a weary slope of Apennine,
At sober dusk of day's decline,
Out of the solemn solitude

Of Vallombrosa's antique wood,
A withered woman, tanned and bent,
Bearing her bundled brushwood went,
Poising it on her palsied head,
As if in penance for prayers unsaid.

Her dull cheeks channelled were with tears,
Shed in the storms of eighty years;
Her wild hair fell in gusty flow,
White as the foamy brook below:
Still toiled she with her load alone,
With feeble feet but steadfast will,
To gain her little home, that shone
Like a dreary lantern on the hill.

The mountain child no toil could tame
With lighter load beside her came,
Spake kindly, but its accents fond
Were lost, — soon lost on the heights beyond.
There came the maid in her glowing dress,
The wild-eyed witch of the wilderness,
Her brush-load shadowing her face,
Her upright figure full of grace,
Like those tall pines whose only boughs
Are gathered round their dusky brows;
Singing, she waved her hand, "Good night,"
And round the mountain passed from sight.

There climbed the laborers from their toil,
Brown as their own Italian soil;
Like Satyrs, some in goatskin suits,

Some bearing home the scanty fruits
Of harvest work, — the swinging flasks
Of oil or wine, or little casks,
Under which the dull mule went
Cheered with its bell, and the echoes sent
From others on the higher height,
Saying to the vale, "Good night," —
"Good night"; and still the withered dame
Slowly staggered on the same.

Here, astride of his braying beast,
A brown monk came, and then a priest;
Each telling to the shadowy air,
Perchance, their "Ave Maria" prayer;
For the sky was full of vesper showers,
Shook from the many convent towers,
Which fell into the woman's brain
Like dew upon an arid plain.
These pious men beside her rode, —
She crossed herself beneath her load,
As best she could, — and so "Good night,"
And they rode upward out of sight.

How far, how very far it seemed,
To where that starry taper gleamed,
Placed by her grandchild on the sill
Of the cottage window on the hill!
Many a parent heart before,
Laden till it could bear no more,
Has seen a heavenward light that smiled,
And knew it placed there by a child, —

A long-gone child, whose anxious face
Gazed toward them down the deeps of space,
Longing for the loved to come
To the quiet of that home.

Steeper and rougher grew the road,
Harder and heavier grew the load;
Her heart beat like a weight of stone
Against her breast. A sigh and moan
Mingled with prayer escaped her lips
Of sorrow, o'er sorrowing night's eclipse.
"Of all who pass me by," she said,
"There is never one to lend me aid;
Could I but gain yon wayside shrine,
There would I rest this load of mine,
And tell my sacred rosary through,
And try what patient prayer would do."

Again she heard the toiling tread
Of one who climbed that way, and said,
"I will be bold, though I should see
A monk or priest, or it should be
The awful abbot, at whose nod
The frighted people toil and plod:
I'll ask his aid to yonder place,
Where I may breathe a little space,
And so regain my home." He came,
And, halting by the ancient dame,
Heard her brief story and request,
Which moved the pity in his breast;
And so he straightway took her load,

Toiling beside her up the road.
Until, with heart that overflowed,
She begged him lay her bundled sticks
Close at the feet of the crucifix.

So down he set her brushwood freight
Against the wayside cross, and straight
She bowed her palsied head to greet
And kiss the sculptured Saviour's feet;
And then and there she told her grief,
In broken sentences and brief.
And now the memory o'er her came
Of days blown out, like a taper flame,
Never to be relighted, when,
From many a summer hill and glen,
She culled the loveliest blooms to shine
About the feet of this same shrine;
But now, where once her flowers were gay,
Naught but the barren brushwood lay!
She wept a little at the thought,
And prayers and tears a quiet brought,
Until anon, relieved of pain,
She rose to take her load again.
But lo! the bundle of dead wood
Had burst to blossom! and now stood
Dawning upon her marvelling sight,
Filling the air with odorous light!

Then spake her traveller-friend: "Dear Soul,
Thy perfect faith hath made thee whole!
I am the Burthen-Bearer, — I

Will never pass the o'erladen by.
My feet are on the mountain steep;
They wind through valleys dark and deep;
They print the hot dust of the plain,
And walk the billows of the main.
Wherever is a load to bear,
My willing shoulder still is there!
Thy toil is done!" He took her hand,
And led her through a May-time land;
Where round her pathway seemed to wave
Each votive flower she ever gave
To make her favorite altar bright,
As if the angels, at their blight,
Had borne them to the fields of blue,
Where, planted mid eternal dew,
They bloom, as witnesses arrayed
Of one on earth who toiled and prayed.

Thomas Buchanan Read.

VALLOMBROSA.

DARK Vallombrosa! thy Etrurian shade
Is hallowed by a spell that is not thine:
A spirit lingers here that doth pervade
Thy sanctuary: earth is made divine
From human memories, when upon each line
Of her calm brow the signet is confessed;
Memnonian image! as, with touches fine
Morn's fingers music from its bosom pressed,
So genius kindles life from thy responsive breast.

Doubt'st thou her inspirations? lo, yon peaks
Titanic, burying their spears in heaven
As if they dared the thunder, or where breaks
Through mist and foam yon torrents headlong driven,
Hurled over trees and precipices riven:
Hark! to their roar in yon Tartarean dell,
Ravings as of the tortured unforgiven;
Type they not elder faiths to us and tell
The strife of powers opposed, the war of heaven and hell?

Lo! round the mountain's scathed sides like a wall,
Pines lightning-blasted, wear such forms as wore
The thunder-stricken angels: like a pall
The up-seething mists rise shrouding white and hoar,
Forests all crushed, still raising from the roar
Of waters their wild branches red and sere,
Thick as the weeds on ocean's surf-heaped shore;
This is the vale of shadow, pause thou here
Where deathless Milton trod, the sacred ground revere.

O, while these autumn leaves are round me lying,
While thy Etrurian shades o'erarched embower,
While the wind seems thy voice to mine replying,
Bard of lost Paradise, I call thee, power
That liv'st among us, hear! while the clouds lower,
And the leaves mount the whirlwind, I would be
Conscious of thy great presence in this hour:
I would behold thee, like the prophet, flee
Heavenward, but left on earth thy robe of prophecy.

John Edmund Reade.

Varese, the Lake.

LAGO VARESE.

I STOOD beside Varese's Lake,[1]
Mid that redundant growth
Of vines and maize and bower and brake
Which Nature, kind to sloth,
And scarce solicited by human toil,
Pours from the riches of the teeming soil.

A mossy softness distance lent
To each divergent hill,
One crept away looking back as it went,
The rest lay round and still;
The westering sun not dazzling now, though bright,
Shed o'er the mellow land a molten light.

And, sauntering up a circling cove,
I found upon the strand
A shallop, and a girl who strove
To drag it to dry land:
I stood to see the girl look round; her face
Had all her country's clear and definite grace.

She rested with the air of rest
So seldom seen, of those
Whose toil remitted gives a zest,
Not languor, to repose.

Her form was poised yet buoyant, firm though free,
And liberal of her bright black eyes was she.

Her hue reflected back the skies
Which reddened in the west;
And joy was laughing in her eyes
And bounding in her breast,
Its rights and grants exulting to proclaim
Where pride had no inheritance, nor shame.

* * *

Methought this scene before mine eyes,
Still glowing with yon sun,
Which seemed to melt the myriad dyes
Of heaven and earth to one,
A divers unity, — methought this scene,
These undulant hills, the woods that intervene,

The multiplicity of growth,
The cornfield and the brake,
The trellised vines that cover both,
The purple-bosomed lake,
Some fifty summers hence may all be found
Rich in the charms wherewith they now abound.

And should I take my staff again,
And should I journey here,
My steps may be less steady then,
My eyesight not so clear,
And from the mind the sense of beauty may,
Even as these bodily gifts, have passed away;

But grant my age but eyes to see,
A still susceptive mind,
All that leaves us, and all that we
Leave wilfully behind,
And nothing here would want the charms it wore
Save only she who stands upon the shore.

Henry Taylor.

LINES WRITTEN BESIDE THE LAGO VARESE.

STILL rise around that lake well sung
New growths as boon and good
As when, by sunshine saddened, hung
Her poet o'er that flood,
And sang, in Idyl-Elegy, a lay
Which praised things beauteous, mourning their decay.

As then great Nature, "kind to sloth,"
Lets drop o'er all the land
Her gifts, the fair and fruitful both,
Into the sleeper's hand:
On golden ground once more she paints as then
The cistus bower and convent-brightened glen.

Still o'er the flashing waters lean
The mulberry and the maize,
And roof of vines whose purple screen
Tempers those piercing rays,
Which here forego their fiercer shafts, and sleep,
Subdued, in crimson cells, and verdurous chambers deep.

And still in many a sandy creek
Light waves run on and up,
While the foam-bubbles winking break
Around their channelled cup;
Against the rock they toss the bleeding gourd,
Or lap on marble stair and skiff unmoored.

Fulfilled thus far the poet's words; —
And yet a truth that hour
By him unsung upon his chords
Descends, their ampler dower.
Of Nature's cyclic life he sang, nor knew
That frailer shape he mourned should bloom perpetual too.

There still, not skilful to retract
A glance as kind as keen,
By the same southern sunset backed,
There still that Maid is seen:
Through song's high grace there stands she! from her eyes
Still beams the cordial mirth, the unshamed surprise!

Not yet those parted lips remit
A smile that grows and grows:
The Titianic morning yet
Breaks from that cheek of rose;
Still from her locks the breeze its sweetness takes;
Around her white feet still the ripple fawns and rakes.

And, brightening in the radiance cast
By her on all around,

That shore lives on, while song may last,
Love-consecrated ground;
Lives like that isthmus, headland half, half isle,
Which smiled to meet Catullus' homeward smile.

O Sirmio! thou that shedd'st thy fame
O'er old Verona's lake,
Henceforth Varese without blame
Thine honors shall partake:
A Muse hath sung her, on whose front with awe
Thy nymphs had gazed as though great Virtue's self they saw!

What shape is that, though fair severe,
Which fleets triumphant by
Imaged in yonder mirror clear,
And seeks her native sky,
With locks succinct beneath a threatening crest, —
Like Juno in the brow, like Pallas in the breast?

A Muse that flatters nothing base
In man, nor aught infirm,
"Sows the slow olive for a race
Unborn." The destined germ,
The germ alone of Fame she plants, nor cares
What time that secular tree its shining fruitage bears;

Pleased rather with her function sage —
To interpret Nature's heart;
The words on Wisdom's sacred page
To wing, through metric art,

With life; and in a chariot of sweet sound
Down-trodden Truth to lift and waft the world around.

Hail, Muse, whose crown, soon won or late,
Is Virtue's, not thine own!
Hail, Verse, that tak'st thy strength and state
From Thought's auguster throne!
Varese too would hail thee! Hark! that song, —
Her almond bowers it thrills and rings her groves along!

Aubrey de Vere.

Veii.

THE DESOLATION OF VEII.

'T WAS on a Sabbath morning that we wandered in the wood,
Where near three thousand years ago the ancient Veii stood;
There 's not a sound of life there now, where wandering alleys meet,
The cyclamen and violet grow purple in the street!
The glens are deep and leafy, the fields are green and bare,
And only scattered pottery tells that arts and trade were there,
And looking towards the Alban Mount across the solemn plains,

The ground on which we stand is all of Veii that remains.
A hundred thousand people once dwelt upon this hill,
Within their many towered walls the hum was never still.
The sculptor and the armorer worked as soon as it was light,
And watchman unto watchman called through all the starry night.
They had laws, and arts, and customs, and altars to revere;
They buried with a solemn care the dead whom they held dear,
Whom they crowned with golden ivy and with oak-leaves never sear.
And the city on the hill-top where this people had their home
Was a larger town than Athens and a mightier town than Rome.
A wondrous place is Veii, and the grandeur of her past
Will linger in these solitudes and crown her to the last.
Still I see her in a vision, though her very streets are ploughed,
See the faces of her people, hear the voices of her crowd,
See the waving of her banners, hear the tramp of armed men,
Where nothing but the waterfall is dashing down the glen.
Other cities have their columned hills and fragments of their walls,
Or at least their ruined temples, on which the moonlight falls.

Other cities have their solemn sights, to which the pilgrim turns,
And some altar of tradition where a lamp forever burns;
A ballad or a legend, or a few memorial stones,
And a breath of living history to reanimate their bones.
But of Veii, strong and beautiful, these silent stones are all,
Save her graves within the hillside and a patch of ruined wall,
And the rocks cut sheer to guard her, and the streams that flow the same,
And (foreign to the pilgrim's lips) the accents of her name!

Bessie Rayner Parkes.

VEII.

I LEANED against a gray and mouldering wall,
Last wreck of Troy-like Veii: the bird
Nestled amid its flower-crowned coronal;
Inward tradition's cloudy voice I heard:
I thought of when the twin-born cities stirred
Contending in time's womb for earliest birth,
While fate had stamped the irrevocable word:
Death-doomed the one, the other ruling earth,
To prove the moral drawn from fame and fortune's worth.

John Edmund Reade.

Venice.

VENICE.

VENETIA stands with endless beauties crowned,
And as a world within herself is found.
Hail, queen of Italy! for years to come
The mighty rival of immortal Rome!
Nations and seas are in thy states enrolled,
And kings among thy citizens are told.
Ausonia's brightest ornament! by thee
She sits a sovereign, unenslaved and free;
By thee, the rude barbarian chased away,
The rising sun cheers with a purer ray
Our western world, and doubly gilds the day.

Jacopo Sannazzaro. Tr. Joseph Addison.

SHYLOCK AND ANTONIO.

SIGNIOR Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my monies and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe;
You call me — misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to then; you come to me, and you say,

"Shylock, we would have monies": you say so;
You that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; monies is your suit;
What should I say to you? should I not say
"Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondsman's key,
With 'bated breath, and whispering humbleness,
Say this, —
"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last:
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You call'd me — dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much monies?"

William Shakespeare.

VENICE.

NOR be the then triumphant state forgot;
Where, pushed from plundered earth, a remnant still
Inspired by me, through the dark ages kept
Of my old Roman flame some sparks alive:
The seeming god-built city! which my hand
Deep in the bosom fixed of wondering seas.
Astonished mortals sailed, with pleasing awe,
Around the sea-girt walls by Neptune fenced,
And down the briny street; where on each hand,
Amazing seen amid unstable waves,
The splendid palace shines; and rising tides,
The green steps marking, murmur at the door.
To this fair queen of Adria's stormy gulf,

The mart of nations! long, obedient seas
Rolled all the treasure of the radiant East.
But now no more. Than one great tyrant worse
(Whose shared oppression lightens, as diffused),
Each subject tearing, many tyrants rose.
The least the proudest. Joined in dark cabal,
They jealous, watchful, silent, and severe,
Cast o'er the whole indissoluble chains;
The softer shackles of luxurious ease
They likewise added, to secure their sway.
Thus Venice fainter shines; and Commerce thus,
Of toil impatient, flags the drooping sail.

James Thomson.

VENICE.

I STOOD in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand;
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying glory smiles
O'er the far times when many a subject land
Looked to the wingéd's Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers.
And such she was; her daughters had their dowers

From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Poured in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deemed their dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear:
Those days are gone, but beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade, but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the Dogeless city's vanished sway:
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away, —
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,

First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

* * *

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
And, annual marriage now no more renewed,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood!
St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
Stand, but in mockery of his withered power,
Over the proud place where an emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequalled dower.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns, —
An emperor tramples where an emperor knelt;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosened from the moun'ain's belt:
O for one hour of blind old Dandolo!
The octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering-foe.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;
But is not Doria's menace come to pass?
Are they not bridled? Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a seaweed, into whence she rose!
Better be whelmed beneath the waves, and shun,

Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

In youth she was all glory, — a new Tyre, —
Her very byword sprung from victory,
The "Planter of the Lion," which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite:
Witness Troy's rival, Candia! Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight!
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

* * *

I loved her from my boyhood, — she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn and of wealth the mart;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's art,
Had stamped her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part,
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

I can repeople with the past, — and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chastened down, enough;
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;
And of the happiest moments which were wrought
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colors caught;
There are some feelings time cannot benumb,
Nor torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

Lord Byron.

THE CARNIVAL.

OF all the places where the Carnival
Was most facetious in the days of yore,
For dance, and song, and serenade, and ball,
And masque, and mime, and mystery, and more
Than I have time to tell now, or at all,
Venice the bell from every city bore;
And at the moment when I fix my story
That sea-born city was in all her glory.

They 've pretty faces yet, those same Venetians,
Black eyes, arched brows, and sweet expressions still;
Such as of old were copied from the Grecians,
In ancient arts by moderns mimicked ill;
And like so many Venuses of Titian's
(The best 's at Florence, — see it, if ye will),
They look when leaning over the balcony,
Or stepped from out a picture by Giorgione,

Whose tints are truth and beauty at their best;
And when you to Manfrini's palace go,
That picture (howsoever fine the rest)
Is loveliest to my mind of all the show:
It may perhaps be also to your zest,
And that 's the cause I rhyme upon it so:
'T is but a portrait of his son, and wife,
And self; but such a woman! love in life!

Lord Byron.

SAN GIOVANNI AND SAN PAOLO.

I AM before the hour, the hour whose voice,
Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
These palaces with ominous tottering,
And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,
Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
Of indistinct but awful augury
Of that which will befall them. Yes, proud city!
Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes thee
A lazar-house of tyranny: the task
Is forced upon me, I have sought it not;
And therefore was I punished, seeing this
Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
And I am tainted, and must wash away
The plague-spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!
Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow
The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,
Mouldered into a mite of ashes, hold
In one shrunk heap what once made many heroes,
When what is now a handful shook the earth, —
Fane of the tutelar saints who guard our house!
Vault where two doges rest, — my sires! who died
The one of toil, the other in the field,
With a long race of other lineal chiefs
And sages, whose great labors, wounds, and state

I have inherited, — let the graves gape,
Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
I call them up, and them and thee to witness
What it hath been which put me to this task, —
Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,
Their mighty name dishonored all in me,
Not by me, but by the ungrateful nobles
We fought to make our equals, not our lords.

Lord Byron.

PALAZZO LIONI.

AROUND me are the stars and waters, —
Worlds mirrored in the ocean, goodlier sight
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great element, which is to space
What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,
Softened with the first breathings of the spring;
The high moon sails upon her beauteous way
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Reared up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
No other record. All is gentle: naught

Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight; the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto,
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
The ocean-born and earth-commanding city.

Lord Byron.

DUCAL PALACE.

I SPEAK to Time and to Eternity,
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.
Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which fluttered o'er as if you loved it,
And filled my swelling sails as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,

Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but
Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!
Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and thou!
Who kindlest and who quenchest suns! — Attest!
I am not innocent, — but are these guiltless?
I perish, but not unavenged; far ages
Float up from the abyss of time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud city, and I leave my curse
On her and hers forever! Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield
Unto a bastard Attila, without
Shedding so much blood in her last defence
As these old veins, oft drained in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice. She shall be bought
And sold, and be an appanage to those
Who shall despise her! She shall stoop to be
A province for an empire, petty town
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles, panders for a people!
Then when the Hebrew in thy palaces,
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his!
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need
Make their nobility a plea for pity!

Lord Byron.

VENICE.

O VENICE! Venice! when thy marble walls
Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do? — anything but weep?
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers, as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.
O agony! that centuries should reap
No mellower harvest! Thirteen hundred years
Of wealth and glory turned to dust and tears;
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;
And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas, — and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs

The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When vice walks forth with her unsoftened terrors,
And mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay.

Lord Byron.

VENICE.

THERE is a glorious city in the sea.
The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
Ebbing and flowing; and the salt sea-weed
Clings to the marble of her palaces.
No track of men, no footsteps to and fro,
Lead to her gates. The path lies o'er the sea,
Invisible; and from the land we went,
As to a floating city, — steering in,
And gliding up her streets as in a dream,
So smoothly, silently, — by many a dome,
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,
The statues ranged along an azure sky;
By many a pile in more than Eastern pride,
Of old the residence of merchant-kings;
The fronts of some, though time had shattered them,
Still glowing with the richest hues of art,
As though the wealth within them had run o'er.

* * *

A few in fear,
Flying away from him whose boast it was,

That the grass grew not where his horse had trod,
Gave birth to Venice. Like the waterfowl,
They built their nests among the ocean-waves;
And where the sands were shifting, as the wind
Blew from the north or south, — where they that came
Had to make sure the ground they stood upon,
Rose, like an exhalation from the deep,
A vast metropolis, with glistering spires,
With theatres, basilicas adorned;
A scene of light and glory, a dominion,
That has endured the longest among men.

Samuel Rogers.

ST. MARK'S PLACE.

OVER how many tracts, vast, measureless,
Ages on ages roll, and none appear
Save the wild hunter ranging for his prey;
While on this spot of earth, the work of man,
How much has been transacted! Emperors, popes,
Warriors, from far and wide, laden with spoil,
Landing, have here performed their several parts,
Then left the stage to others. Not a stone
In the broad pavement, but to him who has
An eye, an ear for the inanimate world,
Tells of past ages.
In that temple-porch
(The brass is gone, the porphyry remains)
Did Barbarossa fling his mantle off,
And, kneeling, on his neck receive the foot
Of the proud Pontiff, — thus at last consoled

For flight, disguise, and many an aguish shake
On his stone pillow.
In that temple-porch,
Old as he was, so near his hundredth year,
And blind, — his eyes put out, — did Dandolo
Stand forth, displaying on his crown the cross.
There did he stand, erect, invincible,
Though wan his cheeks, and wet with many tears,
For in his prayers he had been weeping much;
And now the pilgrims and the people wept
With admiration, saying in their hearts,
"Surely those aged limbs have need of rest!"
There did he stand, with his old armor on,
Ere, gonfalon in hand, that streamed aloft,
As conscious of its glorious destiny,
So soon to float o'er mosque and minaret,
He sailed away, five hundred gallant ships,
Their lofty sides hung with emblazoned shields,
Following his track to fame. He went to die;
But of his trophies four arrived erelong,
Snatched from destruction, — the four steeds divine,
That strike the ground, resounding with their feet,
And from their nostrils snort ethereal flame
Over that very porch; and in the place
Where in an after-time, beside the Doge,
Sate one yet greater, one whose verse shall live
When the wave rolls o'er Venice. High he sate,
High over all, close by the ducal chair,
At the right hand of his illustrious host,
Amid the noblest daughters of the realm,
Their beauty shaded from the western ray

By many-colored hangings; while, beneath,
Knights of all nations, some of fair renown
From England, from victorious Edward's court,
Their lances in the rest, charged for the prize.

Samuel Rogers.

LIDO.

I RODE one evening with Count Maddalo
Upon the bank of land which breaks the flow
Of Adria towards Venice: a bare strand
Of hillocks, heaped from ever-shifting sand,
Matted with thistles and amphibious weeds,
Such as from earth's embrace the salt ooze breeds,
Is this, an uninhabited sea-side,
Which the lone fisher, when his nets are dried,
Abandons; and no other object breaks
The waste, but one dwarf tree and some few stakes
Broken and unrepaired, and the tide makes
A narrow space of level sand thereon,
Where 't was our wont to ride while day went down.
This ride was my delight. I love all waste
And solitary places, where we taste
The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be;
And such was this wide ocean, and this shore
More barren than its billows: and yet more
Than all, with a remembered friend I love
To ride as then I rode; — for the winds drove
The living spray along the sunny air
Into our faces; the blue heavens were bare,

Stripped to their depths by the awakening north;
And from the waves sound like delight broke forth
Harmonizing with solitude, and sent
Into our hearts aerial merriment.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

VENICE.

SUN-GIRT city! thou hast been
Ocean's child, and then his queen;
Now is come a darker day,
And thou soon must be his prey,
If the power that raised thee here
Hallow so thy watery bier,
A less drear ruin then than now,
With thy conquest-branded brow
Stooping to the slave of slaves
From thy throne, among the waves
Wilt thou be, when the sea-mew
Flies, as once before it flew,
O'er thine isles depopulate,
And all is in its ancient state,
Save where many a palace-gate
With green sea-flowers overgrown
Like a rock of ocean's own,
Topples o'er the abandoned sea
As the tides change sullenly.
The fisher on his watery way,
Wandering at the close of day,
Will spread his sail and seize his oar

Till he pass the gloomy shore,
Lest thy dead should, from their sleep
Bursting o'er the starlight deep,
Lead a rapid masque of death
O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold
Quivering through aerial gold,
As I now behold them here,
Would imagine not they were
Sepulchres, where human forms,
Like pollution-nourished worms,
To the corpse of greatness cling,
Murdered, and now mouldering;
But if Freedom should awake
In her omnipotence, and shake
From the Celtic anarch's hold
All the keys of dungeons cold,
Where a hundred cities lie
Chained like thee, ingloriously,
Thou and all thy sister band
Might adorn this sunny land,
Twining memories of old time
With new virtues more sublime;
If not, perish thou and they,
Clouds which stain truth's rising day
By her sun consumed away,
Earth can spare ye: while like flowers,
In the waste of years and hours,
From your dust new nations spring
With more kindly blossoming.

Perish! let there only be
Floating o'er thy hearthless sea,
As the garment of thy sky
Clothes the world immortally,
One remembrance, more sublime
Than the tattered pall of Time,
Which scarce hides thy visage wan,
That a tempest-cleaving swan
Of the songs of Albion,
Driven from his ancestral streams
By the might of evil dreams,
Found a nest in thee; and Ocean
Welcomed him with such emotion
That its joy grew his, and sprung
From his lips like music flung
O'er a mighty thunder-fit,
Chastening terror: what though yet
Poesy's unfailing river,
Which through Albion winds forever,
Lashing with melodious wave
Many a sacred poet's grave,
Mourn its latest nursling fled!
What though thou with all thy dead
Scarce can for this fame repay
Aught thine own, — O, rather say,
Though thy sins and slaveries foul
Overcloud a sunlike soul!
As the ghost of Homer clings
Round Scamander's wasting springs;
As divinest Shakespeare's might
Fills Avon and the world with light,

Like omniscient power, which he
Imaged mid mortality;
As the love from Petrarch's urn,
Yet amid yon hills doth burn,
A quenchless lamp, by which the heart
Sees things unearthly: so thou art,
Mighty spirit; so shall be
The city that did refuge thee.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

ONCE did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West: the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.

William Wordsworth.

ROW GENTLY HERE.

ROW gently here, my gondolier; so softly wake the tide,
That not an ear on earth may hear, but hers to whom we glide.
Had Heaven but tongues to speak, as well as starry eyes to see,
O, think what tales 't would have to tell of wandering youths like me!

Now rest thee here, my gondolier; hush, hush, for up I go,
To climb yon light balcony's height, while thou keep'st watch below.
Ah! did we take for heaven above but half such pains as we
Take day and night for woman's love, what angels we should be!

Thomas Moore.

WHEN THROUGH THE PIAZZETTA.

WHEN through the Piazzetta
Night breathes her cool air,
Then, dearest Ninetta,
I 'll come to thee there.
Beneath thy mask shrouded,
I 'll know thee afar,

As Love knows, though clouded,
His own Evening Star.

In garb, then, resembling
Some gay gondolier,
I'll whisper thee, trembling,
"Our bark, love, is near:
Now, now, while there hover
Those clouds o'er the moon,
'T will waft thee safe over
Yon silent Lagoon."

Thomas Moore.

AT VENICE.

ON THE LIDO.

ON her still lake the city sits
While bark and boat beside her flits,
Nor hears, her soft siesta taking,
The Adriatic billows breaking.

IN THE PIAZZA AT NIGHT.

O beautiful beneath the magic moon
To walk the watery way of palaces!
O beautiful, o'er-vaulted with gemmed blue,
This spacious court! with color and with gold,
With cupolas and pinnacles and points
And crosses multiplex and tips and balls
(Wherewith the bright stars unreproving mix,
Nor scorn by hasty eyes to be confused);

Fantastically perfect this lone pile
Of Oriental glory; these long ranges
Of classic chiselling; this gay flickering crowd,
And the calm Campanile, — beautiful!
O, beautiful!

My mind is in her rest; my heart at home
In all around; my soul secure in place,
And the vext needle perfect to her poles.
Aimless and hopeless in my life, I seemed
To thread the winding by-ways of the town
Bewildered, baffled, hurried hence and thence,
All at cross purpose ever with myself,
Unknowing whence or whither. Then, at once,
At a step, I crown the Campanile's top,
And view all mapped below; islands, lagoon,
An hundred steeples, and a myriad roofs,
The fruitful champaign, and the cloud-capt Alps,
And the broad Adriatic.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

VENICE.

THE sun is setting; his last rays are steeping
In golden hues you clouds that steadfast keep
Their station on the far horizon sleeping,
Breasting the sky yet blended with the deep:
Lo, from their braided edges glittering creep
Sharp pointed spires, in blue air faintly shown
O'ershadowed as the sea-mists round them sweep;
Away, those azure mists are substant grown,
Fair Venice there reclines upon her ocean-throne!

Yea, there she sleeps, while on the waters lying
Her spires and gilded domes reflected shine
In the rich lustre shed by twilight dying;
Silent and lone as a deserted shrine
Reared o'er that mirror's floating hyaline;
Ancestral Venice! earth to her bowed down
Deeming her Roman birth should mock decline:
There still is throned the queen without her crown,
The halo round her forehead of her past renown.

Enter as in the vision of a dream,
Where all is strange, grotesque, mysterious, wild,
Ye glide through paths that are the ocean stream;
Mid palaces with sea-green weed defiled,
Looking desertion, yet unreconciled
To be the sepulchres of greatness fled:
Where silence is a presence felt, the child
Of desolation, for ye hear no tread,
No shout, no trump, to wake this city of the dead!

* * *

Yea, all is here romantic, strange and wild,
And mystical and dreamlike: lo, the square
Where domes and spires and minarets are piled,
The ducal hall's barbaric splendor there,
The steeds of bronze that glitter in the air
Bridled: the towering Campanile's height
Where Galileo found his starry chair,
And yonder triple shrine that fills the sight
With a strange sense of awe, of marvel, yet delight.

The Greek, the Goth, the Saracenic twined,
Spires reared o'er Moorish cupolas appear;

The long arched front, with myriad columns lined:
Behold, undisciplined by art severe,
The poetry of architecture here:
Heaped up and as a conqueror's spoil displayed,
The o'er-crowded wealth of either hemisphere,
Enter, where mantled in her deepest shade
Religion hath her own the sanctuary made.

John Edmund Reade.

VENICE.

THESE marble domes, by wealth and genius graced,
With sculptured forms, bright hues, and Parian stone,
Were once rude cabins midst a lonely waste,
Wild shores of solitude, and isles unknown.
Pure from each vice, 't was here a venturous train
Fearless in fragile barks explored the sea;
Not theirs a wish to conquer or to reign,
They sought these island precincts — to be free.
Ne'er in their souls ambition's flame arose,
No dream of avarice broke their calm repose;
Fraud, more than death, abhorred each artless breast:
O, now, since fortune gilds their brightening day,
Let not those virtues languish and decay,
O'erwhelmed by luxury, and by wealth oppressed!

Giovanni della Casa. Tr. Felicia Hemans.

VENICE.

THERE seems a long, eternal Oh! to dwell
In the still air that softly breathes around,
Wafted from yonder halls, where once the sound
Of jest and revelry was wont to swell.
She dared the ages, yet Venetia fell;
The wheel of Fortune hath no backward bound:
Her haven is desolate; few ships are found
At the Slavonian Quay, once known so well.
How didst thou once, Venetia, gorgeously
Flaunt, like a haughty queen in gold array,
As Paolo Veronese painted thee!
A poet on thy Giant Stair to-day
Lingers beside each wondrous balcony,
His tribute of a fruitless tear to pay.

Graf von Platen. Tr. Thomas Davidson.

TINTORETTO.

SLOW, underneath the Casa d'Oro's wall,
Three searchers and three peering shadows came,
Before them and behind them lurked the night,
Save where the torches' wavering yellow flame
Blew backwards, lighting up the stony face
Of some street statue, or a crucifix:
There was no sound, save where, upon a step,
The water lipped, black as the sluggish Styx.

Like disappointed thieves, they sullen shrunk
To where there sat upon the water-stair,
Resting one foot upon a piled-up boat,
A man wrapped all in black, his tangled hair
Hid half his face, who, crying, "Why, you leave
Your work half done!" chid rough and angrily;
"Rogues, did not Francia say that Tintoret,
The painter, had a daughter dead? Go see!"

Half growling and half mocking, the three knaves
Leaped from the stair into the laden boat,
Joining their master. "Time was made for slaves,"
Cried one in jest: "let the dead woman wait."
And then they quenched each torch, and thrust the bark
Into the fuller tide and Lido way,
Turned the boat's head, and, roaring out a song,
They passed, — those searchers, with their ghastly prey.

Alone, in the barred-up and silent house,
Before whose padlocked door a watchman paced,
Sat one beside a bed, — the curtains closed, —
Brooding entranced; a picture, half erased,
Before him on the easel; palette, brush,
Upon the floor; one lamp, against the wall,
Cast flickering shadows on the tapestry
Of the great palace doorway, wide and tall.

All on a sudden Tintoretto rose,
The haggard, bearded man, so worn and pale,
And tore the curtains back, and set the lamp
By the dead face, and raised the veil

That hid her features, now so saintly calm,
And, with a madman's wild and fevered haste,
Renewed the task that wrung him to the heart,
Muttering, as swiftly the fierce lines he traced:—

"That Titian 's still before me in the race;
The harpies snatch this angel from my side,
And leave his proud-eyed girl, with lavish hair
And great white shoulders, to enhance his pride,
And serve round sweetmeats to the senators,
Who flock to him by dozens, to hand down
To ages, heedless of the boon, each vacant face,
Steeped in one dull dark fog of golden brown.

"He fills the churches, palaces, and halls;
'T is he who sweeps the ducats to his lap.
He paints the emperors, cardinals, and popes;
To him the meanest boatman doffs his cap.
Out on the cunning, envious, wily hunks!
But quick to work before those wretches come,
At the first light, to steal my angel hence,
And tear my darling from her father's home.

"Death took my Lisa first, — 't was half my life;
And now Maria, her own self again,
My hope and solace, my sweet singing-bird,
The soother of my long and bitter pain,
The sun of this old house, the ceaseless joy
Of this whole quarter, very saint and queen,
Pure as the lily in the virgin's hand.
How calm she lies, how still, and how serene!

"Yet we shall meet in Paradise, and there
She 'll smile to see St. Luke my wrinkled hand
Grasp at the golden gate, while Titian takes
The lower seat. I have him on the hip.
That hour will pay for all past checks and spurns;
God grant it dawn, and soon, yes, very soon.
Maria cara, bid St. Jerome come
To see my masterpiece: God grant this boon.

"There I shall see my martyrs and my saints,
Ranged in their circles all to welcome me.
Maria cara, they will bring a crown
For thy old father, — Immortality
Is won at last! Stop, the cold cobalt light
Streams through the curtains on my dead child's bed."
There was a wrenching at the padlocked door,
And loud arose the cry, "Bring out your dead!"

Walter Thornbury.

IN MY GONDOLA.

WHERE high above the silent street
The Campanile springs,
Where round St. Mark's the angels still
Poise their unfaded wings,
I in my floating hearse dream on
While my old boatman sings.

Quick to that lonely Jesuit church
Where the bronze charger stands;
To that old house, — a palace once,
Now spoiled by Austrian hands, —

Its marbles rent by heat and cold,
Ill clamped with rusty bands.

O, not to-day the painting-school,
Where dusky Titians glow,
And where Bellini's jewelled saints
All congregate below.
No, not to-day the chapel dim,
Half lit by silver lamps,
Nor that old Doge's nameless tomb,
Defaced by carking damps.

I go to muse away an hour
O'er glories dead and past,
O'er pride dethroned by cruel Time,
That rude Iconoclast.
O, how this city, Ocean's Queen,
Is beggared now at last!

I pace the rooms where tapestry
Still boasts its faded kings;
Where, quaint and querulous with age,
The old *custode* sings,
And feebly tries to reach the web
Where the lean spider clings.

I seek the Council-room, whose walls
Are stamped with globes and stars,
And where above the throne of state,
Still glowers a painted Mars.
Out on that curséd Austrian drum,
Beneath the window-bars!

I love the chapel, though no priest
Bends at the shrine, now bare,
No starry candles glimmer bright
Through the dim, balmy air;
And yet a halo seems to shine
Round the one picture there.

Here once the Mocenigo lived,
Aping a royal pride,
His golden wealth flashed lustre down
Upon the passing tide,
His purple gondolas long since
A Tyrian glory dyed.

The fount still plashes day by day
Upon the old stained floor,
Where stones turn emerald in the beams
That through the vine-leaves pour;
It ever falls, yet can't efface
One blot of human gore.

There 's blood upon the agate steps
And on the marble stair,
Where the quick lizard flits across,
Fearing the very air.
A bad man's conscience knew such fears,
Long centuries since, just there.

It was a day of proud content:
The Adriatic's tide
Had just received the ring that joined
The bridegroom to the bride;

The golden barge with sails of silk
Moved homeward o'er the tide;

The streets were full of silken cloaks,
With gems the windows shone;
The poorest fishing-girl that day
Her bridal dress had on;
Flags shook from every roof, — the bells
All day had madly gone.

Fresh from his prayers beneath the dome,
The perfumes on his cloak,
Here the Doge sat, and heard the wave
Moan as if one had spoke;
And thought of how the gory rack
Those pale lean limbs had broke.

Thought of the Giant Stairs, where one
Knelt down awhile to pray,
Then stood erect and eyed the crowd
Like a royal stag at bay,
And smiled on doves that o'er him flew
To some isle far away.

He thought of that well-chamber, where
A groaning man did lie,
And of the burning roof, where one
Prepared himself to die;
And e'en the strangler's burly knave
Had tear-drops in his eye;

Or dreamt of the Great Chamber where
The Forty bend and write,

Smiling so grimly when they hear
The brawny headsman smite. —
His dream was broken by a star,
That flashed across the night.

Slow past the marble stairs he saw
A roll of paper float,
Dropped by that sable gondolier
That turns yon corner, — note
How pale his face turns, — "Doge, beware!"
Upon his vision smote.

That night a deep and stifled cry
Rose to a window grate.
The morning came; they found a plume
Beside the water-gate;
A letter torn, some drops of blood.
The Doge had fled, — too late!

Now back, old sturdy gondolier,
My dream has passed away;
Back with my floating hearse, and quick,
Before that dying ray
Leave the last roof, and darkness pall
The dead corse of the day.

The doves upon the copper dome
Flutter at my wild cry,
Now that I see yon saints look up
Devoutly to the sky;
Where Christ upon a golden throne
Is robed and crowned on high.

Yon pillars brave old Dandolo
  Brought from the Asian shore;
Those are the brazen steeds the Greeks
  Bridled in days of yore;
Yonder the wingéd lion tries
  From his stone chains to soar.

But slaves sleep on the church's steps;
  Slaves snore in every boat;
Slaves' songs at night along the tide
  On these free breezes float;
Slaves stab and gamble in the square,
  And tear poor Freedom's throat.

The dead were great; their puny sons,
  Unworthy such a home,
Laugh, sing, and sleep beneath the shade
  Cast by their giant dome,
Slaves of the butcher and the priest,—
  Of Austria and of Rome.

Hark! now the brutal German drum
  Leads on the bayonets. See
Insolent soldiers pacing round
  A city once so free.
Rise, hero of yon lonely isle,
  And give them liberty.

Walter Thornbury.

MEDITATIVE FRAGMENTS, ON VENICE.

WALK in St. Mark's, the time the ample space
Lies in the freshness of the evening shade,
When, on each side, with gravely darkened face,
The masses rise above the light arcade;
Walk down the midst with slowly tunèd pace,
But gay withal, — for there is high parade
Of fair attire and fairer forms, which pass
Like varying groups on a magician's glass.

From broad-illumined chambers far within,
Or under curtains daintily outspread,
Music and laugh and talk, the motley din
Of all who from sad thought or toil are sped,
Here a chance hour of social joy to win,
Gush forth, — but I love best, above my head
To feel nor arch nor tent, nor anything
But that pure Heaven's eternal covering.

It is one broad saloon, one gorgeous hall;
A chamber, where a multitude, all kings,
May hold full audience, splendid festival,
Or Piety's most pompous ministerings;
Thus be its height unmarred, — thus be it all
One mighty room, whose form direct upsprings
To the o'erarching sky; — it is right good,
When Art and Nature keep such brotherhood.

For where, upon the firmest sodden land,
Has ever monarch's power and toil of slaves

Equalled the works of that self-governed band,
Who fixed the Delos of the Adrian waves;
Planting upon these strips of yielding sand
A Temple of the Beautiful, which braves
The jealous strokes of ocean, nor yet fears
The far more perilous sea, "whose waves are years"?

Walk in St. Mark's again, some few hours after,
When a bright sleep is on each storied pile, —
When fitful music and inconstant laughter
Give place to Nature's silent moonlight smile:
Now Fancy wants no faery gale to waft her
To Magian haunt or charm-engirded isle,
All too content, in passive bliss, to see
This show divine of visible poetry.

On such a night as this impassionedly
The old Venetian sung those verses rare,
"That Venice must of needs eternal be,
For Heaven had looked through the pellucid air,
And cast its reflex in the crystal sea,
And Venice was the image pictured there."
I hear them now, and tremble, for I seem
As treading on an unsubstantial dream.

Who talks of vanished glory, of dead power,
Of things that were, and are not? Is he here?
Can he take in the glory of this hour,
And call it all the decking of a bier?
No, surely as on that Titanic tower
The Guardian Angel stands in æther clear,

With the moon's silver tempering his gold wing,
So Venice lives, as lives no other thing: —

That strange Cathedral! exquisitely strange, —
That front, on whose bright varied tints the eye
Rests as of gems, — those arches, whose high range
Gives its rich-broidered border to the sky, —
Those ever-prancing steeds! — My friend, whom change
Of restless will has led to lands that lie
Deep in the East, does not thy fancy set
Above those domes an airy minaret?

Dost thou not feel that in this scene are blent
Wide distances of the estrangéd earth,
Far thoughts, far faiths, beseeming her who bent
The spacious Orient to her simple worth,
Who, in her own young freedom eminent,
Scorning the slaves that shamed their ancient birth,
And feeling what the West could be, had been,
Went out a traveller, and returned a queen?

Lord Houghton.

LIDO.

I WENT to greet the full May-moon
On that long narrow shoal
Which lies between the still Lagoon
And the open ocean's roll.

How pleasant was that grassy shore,
When one for months had been

Shut up in streets, — to feel once more
One's foot fall on the green!

There are thick trees too in that place;
But straight from sea to sea,
Over a rough uncultured space,
The path goes drearily.

I passed along, with many a bound,
To hail the fresh free wave;
But, pausing, wonderingly found
I was treading on a grave.

Then, at one careless look, I saw
That, for some distance round,
Tombstones, without design or law,
Were scattered on the ground:

Of pirates or of mariners
I deemed that these might be
The fitly chosen sepulchres,
Encircled by the sea.

But there were words inscribed on all,
I' the tongue of a far land,
And marks of things symbolical,
I could not understand.

They are the graves of that sad race
Who from their Syrian home,
For ages, without resting-place,
Are doomed in woe to roam;

Who, in the days of sternest faith,
Glutted the sword and flame,
As if a taint of moral death
Were in their very name:

And even under laws most mild,
All shame was deemed their due,
And the nurse told the Christian child
To shun the curséd Jew.

Thus all their gold's insidious grace
Availed not here to gain
For their last sleep a seemlier place
Than this bleak-featured plain.

Apart, severely separate,
On the verge of the outer sea,
Their home of death is desolate
As their life's home could be.

The common sand-path had defaced
And pressed down many a stone;
Others can be but faintly traced
I' the rank grass o'er them grown.

I thought of Shylock, — the fierce heart
Whose wrongs and injuries old
Temper, in Shakespeare's world of art,
His lusts of blood and gold;

Perchance that form of broken pride
Here at my feet once lay, —

But lay alone, — for at his side
There was no Jessica!

Fondly I love each island-shore,
Embraced by Adrian waves;
But none has Memory cherished more
Than Lido and its graves.

Lord Houghton.

WRITTEN AT VENICE.

NOT only through the golden haze
Of indistinct surprise,
With which the Ocean-bride displays
Her pomp to stranger eyes; —
Not with the fancy's flashing play,
The traveller's vulgar theme,
Where following objects chase away
The moment's dazzling dream; —

Not thus art thou content to see
The city of my love,
Whose beauty is a thought to me
All mortal thoughts above;
And pass in dull unseemly haste,
Nor sight nor spirit clear,
As if the first bewildering taste
Were all the banquet here!

When the proud sea, for Venice' sake,
Itself consents to wear

The semblance of a land-locked lake,
Inviolably fair;
And in the dalliance of her isles,
Has levelled his strong waves,
Adoring her with tenderer wiles
Than his own pearly caves, —

Surely may we to similar calm
Our noisy lives subdue,
And bare our bosoms to such balm
As God has given to few;
Surely may we delight to pause
On our care-goaded road,
Refuged from Time's most bitter laws
In this august abode.

Thou knowest this, — thou lingerest here,
Rejoicing to remain;
The plashing oars fall on thy ear
Like a familiar strain;
No wheel prolongs its weary roll,
The earth itself goes round
Slower than elsewhere, and thy soul
Dreams in the void of sound.

Thy heart, by Nature's discipline,
From all disdain refined,
Kept open to be written in
By good of every kind,
Can harmonize its inmost sense
To every outward tone,

And bring to all experience
High reasoning of its own.

So, when these forms come freely out,
And wonder is gone by,
With patient skill it sets about
Its subtle work of joy;
Connecting all it comprehends
By lofty moods of love, —
The earthly Present's farthest ends, —
The Past's deep Heaven above.

O bliss! to watch, with half-shut lid,
By many a secret place,
Where darkling loveliness is hid,
And undistinguished grace, —
To mark the gloom, by slow degrees,
Exfoliate, till the whole
Shines forth before our sympathies,
A soul that meets a soul!

Come out upon the broad Lagoon,
Come for the hundredth time, —
Our thoughts shall make a pleasant tune,
Our words a worthy rhyme;
And thickly round us we will set
Such visions as were seen,
By Tizian and by Tintorett,
And dear old Giambellin, —

And all their peers in art, whose eyes,
Taught by this sun and sea,

Flashed on their works those burning dyes,
That fervent poetry;
And wove the shades so thinly clear
They would be parts of light
In northern climes, where frowns severe
Mar half the charms of sight.

Did ever shape that Paolo drew
Put on such brilliant tire,
As Nature, in this evening view, —
This world of tinted fire?
The glory into whose embrace
The virgin pants to rise
Is but reflected from the face
Of these Venetian skies.

The sun beneath the horizon's brow
Has sunk, not passed away;
His presence is far lordlier now
Than on the throne of day;
His spirit of splendor has gone forth,
Sloping wide violet rays,
Possessing air and sea and earth
With his essential blaze.

Transpierced, transfused, each densest mass
Melts to as pure a glow,
As images on painted glass
Or silken screens can show.
Gaze on the city, — contemplate
With that fine sense of thine

The Palace of the ancient state, —
That wildly grand design!

How mid the universal sheen
Of marble amber-tinged,
Like some enormous baldaquin
Gay-checkered and deep-fringed,
It stands in air and will not move,
Upheld by magic power, —
The dun-lead domes just caught above, —
Beside, the glooming tower.

Now a more distant beauty fills
Thy scope of ear and eye, —
That graceful cluster of low hills,
Bounding the western sky,
Which the ripe evening flushes cover
With purplest fruitage-bloom, —
Methinks that gold-lipt cloud may hover
Just over Petrarch's tomb!

Petrarch! when we that name repeat,
Its music seems to fall
Like distant bells, soft-voiced and sweet,
But sorrowful withal; —
That broken heart of love! — that life
Of tenderness and tears!
So weak on earth, in earthly strife, —
So strong in holier spheres!

How in his most of godlike pride,
While emulous nations ran

To kiss his feet, he stept aside
And wept the woes of man!
How in his genius-woven bower
Of passion ever green,
The world's black veil fell, hour by hour,
Him and his rest between.

Welcome such thoughts; — they well atone
With this more serious mood
Of visible things that night brings on,
In her cool shade to brood;
The moon is clear in heaven and sea,
Her silver has been long
Slow-changing to bright gold, but she
Deserves a separate song.

Lord Houghton.

VENICE.

Venice, dear to every one
Whose gracious star has led him to behold her;
So dear that in the memory she remains,
Like an old love, who would, indeed, have been
Our only love, but died, and all the past
Is full of her untried perfections, while
Amidst the unknown recesses of our hearts
Enthroned she sits, in tenderest mist of thought,
Like the soft brilliancy of autumn haze,
Seen at the setting of the sun: and such
Is Venice, — to repeat her name is sweet,
Just as I love to say the word Oulita.

And then of the dark, swanlike gondolas
We talked; and how, midst crumbling palaces,
Great churches, richly inlaid mosques and columns,
Each step an ample field for history,
And under bridges mossed with dripping sea-weed
(A thousand silvery lights reflected from
The rippling waters, upwards on the arches
Playing fondly, like glad insects in the sun),
The dark-clad gondola went gurgling by,
Its inmate lost in sweetest meditation, —
Went gurgling by, went gurgling by.

Arthur Helps.

VENICE.

WITH talons terrible, for slaughter spread,
On wings that made a tempest of their way,
Down darting from the Alps, by vengeance led,
The Hungarian falcon pounced upon his prey.
From wrath and rapine, trembling with dismay,
The Italian doves before the spoiler sped,
And wide o'er vales and mountains driven astray,
Far from their ravaged homes forever fled.
Then found the wiser halcyon's lovely brood
(Scared from their country ruined and opprest)
A safe asylum on the rolling flood;
By worth upheld, by liberty caressed:
Midst thrones in ashes, cities sunk in blood,
Ages on ages past, — behold the beauteous nest.

Saverio Bettinelli. Tr. James Montgomery.

VENICE BY DAY.

THE splendor of the Orient, here of old
Throned with the West, upon a waveless sea,
Her various-vested, resonant jubilee
Maintains, though Venice hath been bought and sold.
In their high stalls of azure and of gold
Yet stand, above the servile concourse free,
Those brazen steeds, — the Car of Victory
Hither from far Byzantium's porch that rolled.
The wingéd Lions, Time's dejected thralls,
Glare with furled plumes. The pictured shapes that glow
Like sunset clouds condensed upon the walls,
Still boast old wars, or feasts of long ago;
And still the sun his amplest glory pours
On all those swelling domes and watery floors.

Aubrey de Vere.

VENICE IN THE EVENING.

ALAS! mid all this pomp of the ancient time,
And flush of modern pleasure, dull Decay
O'er the bright pageant breathes her shadowy gray.
As on from bridge to bridge I roam and climb,
It seems as though some wonder-working chime
(Whose spell the vision raised and still can sway)
To some far source were ebbing fast away;
As though, by man unheard, with voice sublime

It bade the sea-born Queen of Cities follow
Her sire into his watery realm far down, —
Beneath my feet the courts sound vast and hollow;
And more than evening's darkness seems to frown
On sable barks that, swift yet trackless, fleet
Like dreams o'er dim lagune and watery street.

Aubrey de Vere.

VENICE.

NIGHT in her dark array
Steals o'er the ocean,
And with departed day
Hushed seems its motion.
Slowly o'er yon blue coast
Onward she 's treading,
Till its dark line is lost,
'Neath her veil spreading.
The bark on the rippling deep
Hath found a pillow,
And the pale moonbeams sleep
On the green billow.
Bound by her emerald zone
Venice is lying,
And round her marble crown
Night-winds are sighing.
From the high lattice now
Bright eyes are gleaming,
That seem on night's dark brow,
Brighter stars beaming.
Now o'er the blue lagune

Light barks are dancing,
And 'neath the silver moon
Swift oars are glancing.
Strains from the mandolin
Steal o'er the water,
Echo replies between
To mirth and laughter.
O'er the wave seen afar
Brilliantly shining,
Gleams like a fallen star
Venice reclining.

Frances Anne Kemble.

THE PIAZZA OF ST. MARK AT MIDNIGHT.

HUSHED is the music, hushed the hum of voices;
Gone is the crowd of dusky promenaders, —
Slender-waisted, almond-eyed Venetians,
Princes and paupers. Not a single footfall
Sounds in the arches of the Procuratie.
One after one, like sparks in cindered paper,
Faded the lights out in the goldsmiths' windows.
Drenched with the moonlight lies the still Piazza.

Fair as the palace builded for Aladdin,
Yonder St. Mark uplifts its sculptured splendor, —
Intricate fretwork, Byzantine mosaic,
Color on color, column upon column,
Barbaric, wonderful, a thing to kneel to!
Over the portal stand the four gilt horses,

Gilt hoof in air, and wide distended nostril,
Fiery, untamed, as in the days of Nero.
Skyward, a cloud of domes and spires and crosses;
Earthward, black shadows flung from jutting stone-work.
High over all the slender Campanile
Quivers, and seems a falling shaft of silver!

Hushed is the music, hushed the hum of voices.
From coigne and cornice and fantastic gargoyle,
At intervals the moan of dove or pigeon,
Fairily faint, floats off into the moonlight.
This, and the murmur of the Adriatic,
Lazily restless, lapping the mossed marble,
Staircase or buttress, scarcely break the stillness.
Deeper each moment seems to grow the silence,
Denser the moonlight in the still Piazza.
Hark! on the Tower above the ancient gateway,
The twin bronze Vulcans, with their ponderous hammers,
Hammer the midnight on their brazen bell there!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

SAINT CHRISTOPHER.

IN the narrow Venetian street,
On the wall above the garden gate
(Within the breath of the rose is sweet,
And the nightingale sings there, soon and late),

Stands Saint Christopher, carven in stone,
With the little child in his huge caress,

And the arms of the baby Jesus thrown
About his gigantic tenderness;

And over the wall a wandering growth
Of darkest and greenest ivy clings,
And climbs around them, and holds them both
In its netted clasp of knots and rings,

Clothing the saint from foot to beard
In glittering leaves that whisper and dance
To the child, on his mighty arm upreared,
With a lusty summer exuberance.

To the child on his arm the faithful saint
Looks up with a broad and tranquil joy;
His brows and his heavy beard aslant
Under the dimpled chin of the boy,

Who plays with the world upon his palm,
And bends his smiling looks divine
On the face of the giant mild and calm,
And the glittering frolic of the vine.

He smiles on either with equal grace, —
On the simple ivy's unconscious life,
And the soul in the giant's lifted face,
Strong from the peril of the strife:

For both are his own, — the innocence
That climbs from the heart of earth to heaven,
And the virtue that greatly rises thence
Through trial sent and victory given.

Grow, ivy, up to his countenance,
But it cannot smile on my life as on thine;
Look, Saint, with thy trustful, fearless glance,
Where I dare not lift these eyes of mine.

William Dean Howells.

TO VENICE.

TO the much-desired Venice
My thoughts fly with longing
When, in the clouded night,
My painful feelings
Are oppressed by bitter regret.

Thus the bird wounded
By a venomous serpent
Flies, flies, till wearied out,
And, deadened, drops
Beside its flowery nest.

O most magnificent Venice!
Whosoever has been able to taste
The sweetness of love
Amid thy life of poesy
For eternity will not forget thee!

I love thee in thy desolation,
In thy vestment of mourning;
And in thy gondolas
Which lose themselves among the canals,
Like an uncompleted dream.

I love thee with fervent regret,
For thy beautiful Past,
And for the reminiscences
Of the sacred love,
And of the being I have lost.

Aleksandri. Tr. Henry Stanley.

BIONDINETTA.

ONE evening in the Piazzetta,
Mocenigo, the handsome:
"Biondinetta, Biondinetta!"
He exclaimed gayly, meeting me;
"Dost thou know, dear Venetian,
That thy Madonna has given thee
The small hand of a Patrician,
And large eyes to be loved?

"Dost thou know that it seems to me,
Cospetto! a great sin,
That you should carry water to sell
On your delicate shoulder?
Come with me, dear one, come,
For I would bring you up
To rule like a queen
In palaces of looking-glass."

One day beside the fountain
Titian said to me, softly:
"There is no hand in a condition
To attempt thy portrait;

But I swear by the superb sun,
If thou wishest it, on the spot,
I will make thee immortal,
Attempting only thy shadow."

To-day, in the morning mist,
The new Doge perceived me,
And in the piazza of St. Mark,
Was coming down from the palace.
"Venetian maiden,
Biondinetta!" said he,
"To-morrow into the Adriatic Sea
I am to throw this ring.

"To-morrow, in purple and in gold,
I am to be crowned,
And in the old Bucentaur
To be carried through Venice.
Say that thou wilt be my wife,
I swear by Saint Mark
To devote to thee, Biondina, to thee,
All the pomp of a monarch."

But Biondinetta, the discerning one,
Pursuing rapidly her course,
To all three with sweet words
Answered thus, laughing:
"There is no clearer looking-glass,
There is no portrait more angelic,
Than that which shows itself to me
When I look into the fountain.

"There are no marks of grandeur,
Nor rings of ruby,
With a sweeter glistening
Than the eyes of Tonin.
Than the gondolas in the Piazzetta
There is no throne more to be desired
By his beloved Biondinetta
When he rows her, the happy one."

Aleksandri. Tr. Henry Stanley.

THE GONDOLA.

TILTS the gondola lightly over the wave like a cradle,
And the chest thereupon me of a coffin reminds.
Just so we, 'twixt cradle and coffin, go tilting and floating
On Time's larger canal carelessly on through our life.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Tr. J. S. Dwight.

THE WHITE FLAG ON THE LAGOON BRIDGE AT VENICE.

THE twilight is deepening, still is the wave;
I sit by the window mute as by a grave;
Silent, companionless, secret I pine;
Through my tears where thou liest, I look, Venice mine!

On the clouds, brokenly strewn through the west,
Dies the last ray of the sun sunk to rest,
And a sad sibillance under the moon
Sighs from the broken heart of the Lagoon.

Out of the city a boat draweth near:
"You of the gondola, tell us, what cheer?"
"Bread lacks, the cholera deadlier grows;
From the Lagoon Bridge the white banner blows."

No, no, nevermore, on so great woe,
Bright sun of Italy, nevermore glow!
Over Venetian hopes shattered so soon
Mourn in thy sorrow forever, Lagoon!

Venice, to thee comes at last the last hour,
Martyr illustrious, in thy foe's power;
Bread lacks, the cholera deadlier grows,
From the Lagoon Bridge the white banner blows.

Not all the battle-flames over thee streaming,
Not all the numberless bolts o'er thee screaming,
Not for war's terrors thy free days are dead:
Long live Venice that perished for bread!

On thine immortal page, sculpture, O story,
Others' iniquity, Venice's glory:
Forever thrice infamous let his name be
Who triumphed by famine, my Venice, o'er thee!

Long live Venice; undaunted she fell,
Bravely she fought for her freedom and well;
But bread lacks, the cholera deadlier grows,
From the Lagoon Bridge the white banner blows.

And now be shivered upon the stone here
Till thou be free the mute lyre that I bear.

Unto thee, Venice, shall be my last song,
To thee the last kiss and the last tear belong.

In exile and lonely from home I depart,
But Venice forever shall live in my heart;
In its most sacred place Venice shall be
As was the vision of first love to me.

Lo, the wind rises, and over the pale
Face of its waters the deep sends a wail;
Breaking, the chords shriek, and the voice dies, —
On the Lagoon Bridge the white banner flies!

Arnoldo Fusinato. Tr. W. D. Howells.

SUNRISE IN VENICE.

NIGHT seems troubled and scarce asleep;
Her brows are gathered in broken rest;
Sullen old lion of grand St. Mark
Lordeth and lifteth his front from the dark,
And a star in the east starts up from the deep,
White as my lilies that grow in the west;
And the day leaps up with a star on his breast.
Hist! men are passing hurriedly.
I see the yellow wide wings of a bark
Sail silently over my morning-star.
I see men move in the moving dark,
Tall and silent as columns are, —
Great sinewy men that are good to see,
With hair pushed back and with open breasts;
Barefooted fishermen seeking their boats,
Brown as walnuts and hairy as goats, —

Brave old water-dogs, wed to the sea,
First to their labors and last to their rests.

Ships are moving! I hear a horn;
A silver trumpet it sounds to me,
Deep-voiced and musical, far a-sea
Answers back, and again it calls.
'T is the sentinel-boats that watch the town
All night, as mounting her watery walls,
And watching for pirate or smuggler. Down
Over the sea, and reaching away,
And against the east, a soft light falls, —
Silvery soft as the mist of morn,
And I catch a breath like the breath of day.

The east is blooming! Yea, a rose,
Vast as the heavens, soft as a kiss,
Sweet as the presence of woman is,
Rises and reaches and widens and grows
Right out of the sea, as a blooming tree;
Richer and richer, so higher and higher,
Deeper and deeper it takes its hue;
Brighter and brighter it reaches through
The space of heaven and the place of stars,
Till all is as rich as a rose can be,
And my rose-leaves fall into billows of fire.
Then beams reach upward as arms from a sea;
Then lances and arrows are aimed at me.
Then lances and spangles and spars and bars
Are broken and shivered and strewn on the sea;
And around and about me tower and spire
Start from the billows like tongues of fire.

Joaquin Miller.

VENICE.

I.

NIGHT on the Adriatic, night!
And like a mirage of the plain,
With all her marvellous domes of light,
Pale Venice looms along the main.

No sound from the receding shore,
No sound from all the broad lagoon,
Save where the light and springing oar
Brightens our track beneath the moon;

Or save where yon high campanile
Gives to the listening sea its chime;
Or where those dusky giants wheel
And smite the ringing helm of Time.

'T is past, — and Venice drops to rest;
Alas! hers is a sad repose,
While in her brain and on her breast
Tramples the vision of her foes.

Erewhile from her sad dream of pain
She rose upon her native flood,
And struggled with the Tyrant's chain,
Till every link was stained with blood.

The Austrian pirate, wounded, spurned,
Fled howling to the sheltering shore,

But, gathering all his crew, returned
And bound the Ocean Queen once more.

'T is past, — and Venice prostrate lies, —
And, snarling round her couch of woes,
The watch-dogs, with the jealous eyes,
Scowl where the stranger comes or goes.

II.

Lo! here awhile suspend the oar;
Rest in the Mocenigo's shade,
For Genius hath within this door
His charmed, though transient, dwelling made.

Somewhat of "Harold's" spirit yet,
Methinks, still lights these crumbling halls;
For where the flame of song is set
It burns, though all the temple falls.

O, tell me not those days were given
To Passion and her pampered brood;
Or that the eagle stoops from heaven
To dye his talons deep in blood.

I hear alone his deathless strain
From sacred inspiration won,
As I would only watch again
The eagle when he nears the sun.

III.

O, would some friend were near me now,
Some friend well tried and cherished long,

To share the scene; but chiefly thou,
Sole source and object of my song.

By Olivola's dome and tower,
What joy to clasp thy hand in mine,
While through my heart this sacred hour
Thy voice should melt like mellow wine.

What time or place so fit as this
To bid the gondolier withhold,
And dream through one soft age of bliss
The olden story, never old?

The domes suspended in the sky
Swim all above me broad and fair;
And in the wave their shadows lie, —
Twin phantoms of the sea and air.

O'er all the scene a halo plays,
Slow fading, but how lovely yet;
For here the brightness of past days
Still lingers, though the sun is set.

Oft in my bright and boyish hours
I lived in dreams what now I live,
And saw these palaces and towers
In all the light romance can give.

They rose along my native stream,
They charmed the lakelet in the glen;
But in this hour the waking dream
More frail and dreamlike seems than then.

A matchless scene, a matchless night,
A tide below, a moon above;
An hour for music and delight,
For gliding gondolas and love!

But here, alas! you hark in vain, —
When Venice fell her music died;
And voiceless as a funeral train,
The blackened barges swim the tide.

The harp which Tasso loved to wake,
Hangs on the willow where it sleeps,
And while the light strings sigh or break
Pale Venice by the water weeps.

IV.

'T is past, and weary droops the wing
That thus hath borne me idly on;
The thoughts I have essayed to sing
Are but as bubbles touched and gone.

But, Venice, cold his soul must be,
Who, looking on thy beauty, hears
The story of thy wrongs, if he
Is moved to neither song nor tears.

To glide by temples fair and proud,
Between deserted marble walls,
Or see the hireling foeman crowd
Rough-shod her noblest palace halls;

To know her left to vandal foes
Until her nest be robbed and gone;
To see her bleeding breast, which shows
How dies the Adriatic swan;

To know that all her wings are shorn,
That Fate has written her decree,
That soon the nations here shall mourn
The lone Palmyra of the sea,

Where waved her vassal flags of yore
By valor in the Orient won;
To see the Austrian vulture soar,
A blot against the morning sun;

To hear a rough and foreign speech
Commanding the old ocean mart, —
Are mournful sights and sounds that reach,
And wake to pity, all the heart.

Thomas Buchanan Read.

TO VENICE.

DISHONORED thou hast been, but not debased,
O Venice! he hastes onward who will bring
The girdle that enclosed thy virgin waist,
And will restore to thee thy bridal ring.

Venice! on earth are reptiles who lift high
The crested head, both venomous and strong
Are they; and many by their fangs shall die,
But one calm watcher crushes them erelong.

So fare who ever twists in tortuous ways,
Strewn with smooth promises and broken vows,
Who values drunken shouts, not sober praise,
And spurns the scanty pittance Truth allows.

Walter Savage Landor.

VENICE.

AS one who comes from years of weary roving
To look on her who was his early love,
And findeth for the end of all his loving
Only a green grave and a stone above, —
Only her silent grave; so shall it prove
With him whose heart, full of her history,
Leadeth his feet to Venice. Grief shall move
His eyes to tears as true as tears may be
At sight of her who reigned, the sweetheart of the sea.

Yet she is fair, — O, very, very fair!
The ancient beauty is not buried yet,
But like gold gloss on a dead lady's hair
That lingers when the eyes are still and set,
And the lips locked, winning us to forget
By little and by little all her grace
Till we may bear to lose it; so is met
Life and cold death on the dead city's face, —
Not the sweet life itself, but the life's latest trace.

Still standeth as it stood in days gone by
The glorious basilic with gleaming dome,

Though from its gate no psalm of Victory
Welcomes, as once it did, the standards home:
And where of old over the flashing foam
Golden Venetian galleys swept the sea,
Each stranger trading keel may go and come,
And idle laughter rings, and feet pass free
Where kings have doffed their crowns, and bowed the unbending knee.

No more the gonfalon along the sky
Flaunts as it flaunted in a hundred fights;
Another flag of foreign blazonry,
Red with Venetian blood, of saddest sights
Streams saddest. If above the city's heights
The holy king of angels still doth stand,
No more he waits to bless her days and nights,
But leaneth off for heaven, in act to expand
His plumy wings for flight, far from the lifeless land.

* * *

And ye have all forgotten that the hilt
Is for the hand, and now the day is gone
When for the wasted blood that ye have spilt
Gain had been yours, and what is done, is done:
Therefore, since other hope of help is none,
Pray a last prayer in this your bitter pain
At rising and at setting of the sun,
A Litany to win the Adrian main, —
To rise in gentle wrath, and claim his own again.

Edwin Arnold.

VENICE.

ON rosy Venice' breast
The gondola 's at rest;
No fisher is in sight,
Not a light.

Lone seated on the strand,
Uplifts the lion grand
His foot of bronze on high
Against the sky.

As if with resting wing
Like herons in a ring,
Vessels and shallops keep,
Their quiet sleep

Upon the vapory bay;
And when the light winds play,
Their pennons, lately whist,
Cross in the mist.

The moon is now concealed,
And now but half revealed,
Veiling her face so pale
With starry veil.

In convent of Sainte-Croix
Thus doth the abbess draw

Her ample-folded cape
Round her fair shape.

The palace of the knight,
The staircases so white,
The solemn porticos
Are in repose.

Each bridge and thoroughfare
The gloomy statues there,
The gulf which trembles so
When the winds blow,

All still, save guards who pace,
With halberds long, their space,
Watching the battled walls
Of arsenals.

* * *

Alfred de Musset. Tr. C. F. Bates.

VENICE.

WHITE swan of cities, slumbering in thy nest
So wonderfully built among the reeds
Of the lagoon, that fences thee and feeds,
As sayeth thy old historian and thy guest!
White water-lily, cradled and caressed
By ocean streams, and from the silt and weeds
Lifting thy golden pistils with their seeds,
Thy sun-illumined spires, thy crown and crest!

White phantom city, whose untrodden streets
Are rivers, and whose pavements are the shifting
Shadows of palaces and strips of sky;
I wait to see thee vanish like the fleets
Seen in mirage, or towers of cloud uplifting
In air their unsubstantial masonry.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

PALAZZO ON THE CANAL GRANDE.

SAD night is o'er the City of the Isles,
And o'er a palace that amid her glooming
With a radiant halo smiles,
While music from its windows booming
Floats the voice of masque and measure
Through distant domes and marble piles,
And hymns the jubilee of youth and pleasure.

Between the ripple dimly plashing,
And the dark roof looming high,
Lost in the funereal sky,
Like many-colored jewels flashing,
Small lamps in loops and rosaries of fire,
Verdant and blood-red, trembling, turning,
Yellow, blue, in the deep water burning,
From dark till dawning
Set all aglow the wide concave,
And splash and stain the marble and the nave.

From balconies in air,
The emblazoned silken awning

Flows like a lazy sail;
And gondoliers down there,
And masks upon the stair,
Hear music swelling o'er them like a gale.

Italian grace and gayety,
And silver-bearded policy,
Princes and soldiers, sage and great,
The craft and splendor of the state,
Proud dames, and Adria's fair daughters,
The sirens of Venetian waters,
Beautiful as summer dreams
Dreamed in haunted forest glade
By silvery streams in leafy gleams,
Floating through the awful shade.

The noble palace peopled was right meetly,
And in its wide saloons the dance went featly,
And high above the hum
Swelled the thunder and the hoot
Of theorbo and of viol, of the hautboy and the flute,
And the roaring of the drum.

Anonymous.

Venice, Rivers of.

RIVERS OF VENICE.

VENETIA'S rivers, summoned all around,
Hear the loud call, and answer to the sound:
Her dropping locks the silver Tessin rears,
The blue transparent Adda next appears,
The rapid Adige then erects her head,
And Mincio rising slowly from his bed.
And last Timavus, that, with eager force
From nine wide mouths, comes gushing to his course.

Claudian. Tr. Joseph Addison.

Verona.

THE OLD MAN OF VERONA.

BLEST is the man who in his father's fields
Has past an age of quiet. The same roof
That screened his cradle yields a shelter now
To his gray hairs. He leans upon a staff
Where as a child he crept along the ground,
And in one cottage he has numbered o'er
A length of years. Him fortune has not drawn
Into her whirl of strange vicissitudes;

Nor has he drunk, with ever-changing home,
From unknown rivers. Never on the deep,
A merchant, has he trembled at the storm;
Nor, as a soldier, started at the blare
Of trumpets; nor endured the noisy strife
Of the hoarse-clamoring bar: of the great world
Simply unconscious. To the neighboring town
A stranger, he enjoys the free expanse
Of open heaven. The old man marks his year,
Not by the names of consuls, but computes
Time by his various crops: by apples notes
The autumn; by the blooming flower the spring.
From the same field he sees his daily sun
Go down, and lift again its reddening orb;
And, by his own contracted universe,
The rustic measures the vast light of day.
He well remembers that broad massive oak
An acorn; and has seen the grove grow old,
Coeval with himself. Verona seems
To him more distant than the swarthy Ind:
He deems the lake Benacus like the shores
Of the red gulf. But his a vigor hale
And unabated: he has now outlived
Three ages; though a grandsire, green in years,
With firm and sinewy arms. The traveller
May roam to farthest Spain: he more has known
Of earthly space; the old man more of life.

Claudian. Tr. C. A. Elton.

THE GARDEN SCENE.

HE jests at scars that never felt a wound. —
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks!
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun! —
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious:
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off. —
It is my lady; O, it is my love:
O, that she knew she were! —
She speaks, yet she says nothing; what of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it.
I am too bold, 't is not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head:
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eye in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

William Shakespeare.

VERONA.

NEAR to his evening region was the Sun,
When Hurgonil with his lamented load,
And faithful Tybalt their sad march begun
To fair Verona, where the court aboad.

They slowly rode till night's dominion ceast:
When infant morn (her scarce wak'd beames display'd)
With a scant face peep'd shylie through the east;
And seem'd as yet of the black world afraid.

But by increase of swift expansive light,
The lost horizon was apparent grown,
And many tow'rs salute at once their sight;
The distant glories of a royal town.

Verona, sprung from noble Vera's name;
Whom careless time (still scatt'ring old records
Where they are loosly gather'd up by fame)
Proclaimes the chief of ancient Tuscan lords.

Verona borders on that fatal plaine,
Whose barren thirst was quench'd with valiant blood,
When the rough Cymbrians by fierce Marius slain,
Left hills of bodies where their ensignes stood.

So safely proud this town did now appear;
As if it but immortal dwellers lack'd;

As if Theodoric had ne'r been there,
Nor Attila her wealth and beauty sack'd.

Here Hurgonill might follow with his eye
(As with deep stream it through the city pass't)
The fruitfull and the frighted Adice,
Which thence from noise and nets to sea does haste.

And on her peopled bank they might behold
The toyles of conquest paid with works of pride;
The palace of king Agilulf the old,
Or monument, for ere 't was built he dy'd.

To it that temple joynes, whose lofty head
The prospect of a swelling hill commands;
In whose coole wombe the city springs are bred:
On Dorique pillers this tall temple stands.

This to sooth Heav'n the bloody Clephes built;
As if Heav'n's king so soft and easy were,
So meanly hous'd in Heav'n, and kind to guilt,
That he would be a tyrant's tenant here.

And now they might arrest their wand'ring sight
With that which makes all other objects lost;
Makes Lombard greatness flat to Roman height,
And modern builders blush, that else would boast;

An amphytheater which has controll'd
Unheeded conquests of advancing age,
Windes which have made the trembling world look old,
And the fierce tempests of the Gothick rage,

This great Flaminius did in youth erect,
Where cities sat to see whole armies play
Death's serious part: but this we may neglect,
To mark the bus'ness which begins with day.

As day new open'ng fills the hemisphear,
And all at once; so quickly ev'ry street
Does by an instant op'ning full appear,
When from their dwellings busy dwellers meet.

From wider gates oppressors sally there;
Here creeps the afflicted through a narrow dore;
Groans under wrongs he has not strength to bear,
Yet seeks for wealth to injure others more.

And here the early lawyer mends his pace;
For whom the earlier cliant waited long;
Here greedy creditors their debtors chase,
Who scape by herding in th' indebted throng.

Th' advent'rous merchant whom a storm did wake,
(His ship 's on Adriatic billowes tost)
Does hope of eastern winds from steeples take,
And hastens there a currier to the coast.

* * *

There from sick mirth neglected feasters reel,
Who cares of want in wine's false Lethe steep.
There anxious empty gamsters homeward steal,
And fear to wake, ere they begin to sleep.

Here stooping lab'rers slowly moving are;
Beasts to the rich, whose strength grows rude with ease;

And would usurp, did not their rulers' care
With toile and tax their furious strength appease.

There th' aged walk, whose needless carefulness
Infects them past the mind's best med'cine, sleep;
There some to temples early vows address,
And for th' ore busie world most wisely weep.

To this vast inn where tydes of strangers flow,
The morn and Hurgonil together came;
The morn, whose dewy wings appear'd but slow,
When men the motion mark'd of swifter Fame.

For Fame (whose journeys are through ways unknown,
Traceless and swift, and changing as the wind)
The morn and Hurgonil had much out-gone,
Whilst Truth mov'd patiently within behind.

William Davenant.

THE CONGRESS OF VERONA.

THRICE blest Verona! since the holy three
With their imperial presence shine on thee:
Honored by them, thy treacherous site forgets
The vaunted tomb of all the Capulets:
Thy Scaligers — for what was Dog the Great,
Can Grande (which I venture to translate)
To these sublimer pugs? Thy poet too,
Catullus, whose old laurels yield to new;
Thine amphitheatre, where Romans sate;

And Dante's exile sheltered by thy gate;
Thy good old man, whose world was all within
Thy wall, nor knew the country held him in:
Would that the royal guests it girds about
Were so far like, as never to get out!
Ay, shout! inscribe! rear monuments of shame,
To tell Oppression that the world is tame;
Crowd to the theatre with loyal rage,
The comedy is not upon the stage;
The show is rich in ribandry and stars,
Then gaze upon it through thy dungeon bars;
Clap thy permitted palms, kind Italy,
For thus much still thy fettered hands are free!

Lord Byron.

VERONA.

CROSS Adria's gulf, and land where softly glide
A stream's crisp waves, to join blue Ocean's tide;
Still westward hold thy way, till Alps look down
On old Verona's walled and classic town.
Fair is the prospect; palace, tower, and spire,
And blossomed grove, the eye might well admire;
Heaven-piercing mountains capped with endless snow,
Where winter reigns, and frowns on earth below;
Old castles crowning many a craggy steep,
From which in silver sounding torrents leap:
Southward the plain where Summer builds her bowers,
And floats on downy gales the soul of flowers;
Where orange-blossoms glad the honeyed bee,
And vines in festoons wave from tree to tree;

While, like a streak of sky from heaven let fall,
The deep blue river, glittering, winds through all;
The woods that whisper to the zephyr's kiss,
Where nymphs might taste again Arcadian bliss;
The sun-bright hills that bound the distant view,
And melt like mists in skies of tenderest blue, —
All charm the ravished sense, and dull is he
Who, cold, unmoved, such glorious scene can see.

Here did the famed Catullus rove and dream,
And godlike Pliny drink of Wisdom's stream;
Wronged by his friends, and exiled by his foes,
Amid these vales did Dante breathe his woes,
Raise demons up, call seraphs from the sky,
And frame the dazzling verse that ne'er shall die.
Here, too, hath Fiction weaved her loveliest spell,
Visions of beauty float o'er crag and dell;
But chief we seem to hear at evening hour
The sigh of Juliet in her starlit bower,
Follow her form slow gliding through the gloom,
And drop a tear above her mouldered tomb.

Sweet are these thoughts, and in such favored scene
Methinks life's stormiest skies might grow serene,
Care smooth her brow, the troubled heart find rest,
And, spite of crime and passion, man be blest.
But to our theme: The pilgrim comes to trace
Verona's ruins, not bright Nature's face;
Be still, chase lightsome fancies, ere thou dare
Approach yon pile, so grand yet softly fair;
The mighty circle, breathing beauty, seems

The work of genii in immortal dreams.
So firm the mass, it looks as built to vie
With Alps' eternal ramparts towering nigh.
Its graceful strength each lofty portal keeps,
Unbroken round the first great cincture sweeps;
The marble benches, tier on tier, ascend,
The winding galleries seem to know no end.
Glistening and pure, the summer sunbeams fall,
Softening each sculptured arch and rugged wall.
We tread the arena; blood no longer flows,
But in the sand the pale-eyed violet blows,
While ivy, covering many a bench, is seen,
Staining its white with lines of liveliest green, —
Age-honoring plant! that weds not buildings gay,
With love, still faithful, clinging to decay.

Nicholas Michell.

DANTE AT VERONA.

FAME tells us that Verona's court
Was a fair place. The feet might still
Wander forever at their will
In many ways of sweet resort;
And still in many a heart around
The poet's name due honor found.

Watch we his steps. He comes upon
The women at their palm-playing.
The conduits round the gardens sing
And meet in scoops of milk-white stone,
Where wearied damsels rest and hold
Their hands in the wet spurt of gold.

One of whom, knowing well that he,
By some found stern, was mild with them,
Would run and pluck his garment's hem,
Saying, "Messer Dante, pardon me," —
Praying that they might hear the song
Which first of all he made, when young.

"*Donne che avete!*" . . . Thereunto
Thus would he murmur, having first
Drawn near the fountain, while she nursed
His hand against her side: a few
Sweet words, and scarcely those, half said;
Then turned, and changed, and bowed his head.

* * *

So you may read and marvel not
That such a man as Dante — one
Who, while Can Grande's deeds were done,
Had drawn his robe round him and thought —
Now at the same guest-table fared
Where keen Uguccio wiped his beard.

Through leaves and trellis-work the sun
Left the wine cool within the glass,
They feasting where no sun could pass;
And when the women, all as one,
Rose up with brightened cheeks to go,
It was a comely thing, we know.

But Dante recked not of the wine;
Whether the women stayed or went,
His visage held one stern intent:

And when the music had its sign
To breathe upon them for more ease,
Sometimes he turned and bade it cease.

And as he spared not to rebuke
The mirth, so oft in council he
To bitter truth bore testimony:
And when the crafty balance shook
Well poised to make the wrong prevail,
Then Dante's hand would turn the scale.

And if some envoy from afar
Sailed to Verona's sovereign port
For aid or peace, and all the court
Fawned on its lord, "the Mars of war,
Sole arbiter of life and death," —
Be sure that Dante saved his breath.

And Can La Scala marked askance
These things, accepting them for shame
And scorn, till Dante's guestship came
To be a peevish sufferance:
His host sought ways to make his days
Hateful; and such have many ways.

There was a Jester, a foul lout
Whom the court loved for graceless arts;
Sworn scholiast of the bestial parts
Of speech; a ribald mouth to shout
In folly's horny tympanum
Such things as make the wise man dumb.

Much loved, him Dante loathed. And so,
One day when Dante felt perplexed
If any day that could come next
Were worth the waiting for or no,
And mute he sat amid their din,
Can Grande called the Jester in.

Rank words, with such, are wit's best wealth.
Lords mouthed approval; ladies kept
Twittering with clustered heads, except
Some few that took their trains by stealth
And went. Can Grande shook his hair
And smote his thighs and laughed i' the air.

Then, facing on his guest, he cried, —
"Say, Messer Dante, how it is
I get out of a clown like this
More than your wisdom can provide."
And Dante: "'T is man's ancient whim
That still his like seems good to him."

Also a tale is told, how once,
At clearing tables after meat,
Piled for a jest at Dante's feet
Were found the dinner's well-picked bones;
So laid, to please the banquet's lord,
By one who crouched beneath the board.

Then smiled Can Grande to the rest: —
"Our Dante's tuneful mouth indeed
Lacks not the gift on flesh to feed!"

"Fair host of mine," replied the guest,
"So many bones you 'd not descry
If so it chanced the dog were I."

* * *

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Vesuvius, the Mountain.

VESUVIUS.

VESUVIO, covered with the fruitful vine,
Here flourished once, and ran with floods of wine,
Here Bacchus oft to the cool shades retired,
And his own native Nisa less admired;
Oft to the mountain's airy tops advanced,
The frisking Satyrs on the summits danced;
Alcides here, here Venus graced the shore,
Nor loved her favorite Lacedæmon more.
Now piles of ashes, spreading all around,
In undistinguished heaps deform the ground,
The gods themselves the ruined seats bemoan,
And blame the mischiefs that themselves have done.

Martial. Tr. Joseph Addison.

VESUVIUS.

I.

A WREATH of light-blue vapor, pure and rare,
Mounts, scarcely seen against the bluer sky,
In quiet adoration, silently,

Till the faint currents of the upper air
Dislimn it, and it forms, dissolving there,
The dome, as of a palace, hung on high
Over the mountain; underneath it lie
Vineyards and bays and cities, white and fair.
Might we not think this beauty would engage
All living things unto one pure delight?
O, vain belief! for here, our records tell,
Rome's understanding tyrant from men's sight
Hid, as within a guilty citadel,
The shame of his dishonorable age.

II.

As when unto a mother, having chid
Her child in anger, there have straight ensued
Repentings for her quick and angry mood,
Till she would fain see all its traces hid
Quite out of sight, — even so has Nature bid
Fair flowers, that on the scarred earth she has strewed,
To blossom, and called up the taller wood
To cover what she ruined and undid.
O, and her mood of anger did not last
More than an instant, but her work of peace,
Restoring and repairing, comforting
The Earth, her stricken child, will never cease:
For that was her strange work, and quickly past;
To this her genial toil no end the years shall bring.

III.

That her destroying fury was with noise
And sudden uproar; but far otherwise,
With silent and with secret ministries,
Her skill of renovation she employs:
For Nature, only loud when she destroys,
Is silent when she fashions; she will crowd
The work of her destruction, transient, loud,
Into an hour, and then long peace enjoys.
Yea, every power that fashions and upholds
Works silently, — all things, whose life is sure,
Their life is calm; silent the light that moulds
And colors all things; and without debate
The stars, which are forever to endure,
Assume their thrones and their unquestioned state.

Richard Chenevix Trench.

VESUVIUS.

But, lo! the burning mountain's lava cone
Fills up the vision! Ever does it breathe
From its hot chasms thick sulphur-clouds, which wreathe
Its summit when the still air is unblown.
Mid-height, the mount, with luscious grape o'ergrown,
Swarms with live villages; while underneath
The surface do the no less live flames seethe
The Titan's heart; convulséd agony shown
In quake and rending of the solid earth!
Not seldom, with a throe more terrible,

He bursts his bonds, and blazes arméd forth
With vengeance engined in his lurid hell!
Beautiful in thy play, O Spirit of Fire,
Mountains may crush not thine unconquerable ire!

William Gibson.

VESUVIUS.

O THOU Vesuvius! that risest there
Image of drear eternity, alone
Seated in thy own silent fields of air;
Titan! whose chainless struggles have been shown,
The annihilating powers are still thine own,
Parent of lightnings, and the tempest's shroud,
Crowning, or round thy giant shoulders thrown
In majesty of shadow, ere the cloud
Break on the nether world in fulmined wrath avowed.

Grave of dead cities thou! thy heart is fire,
Thy pulse is earthquake, from thy breast are rolled
The flames in which shall penal earth expire;
Thy robes are of the lava's burning fold,
Thine armed hand the thunderbolt doth hold,
Thy voice is as the trump that calls to doom;
Creator and destroyer! who hath told
What world of life lies buried in thy womb,
What mightiest wrecks are sunk in thy absorbing tomb?

Hark! as we onward pass, the sullen ground
Reverberates beneath the hollow tread,
Where Herculaneum sleeps in trance profound;

A city rises o'er her ashes' bed,
All life, all joy, the living on the dead!
The tear unbidden dims the eye and swells
The heart with its quick throbbings fuller sped:
Deeper than thought a feeling in us tells
Our kindred with the world beneath our feet that dwells.

Spirit of desolation! here thou art
A Presence palpably bodied on the eye:
Thy sternness to the mind thou dost impart,
Awed while inspired by thy sublimity,
Thou that stand'st here aloof, and draw'st a high
And thrilling grandeur from the sense impressed
Thou giv'st, that thou dost make a mockery
Of death and ruin: Destiny confessed
Art thou, thy throne yon mountain's thunder-splitten breast!

John Edmund Reade.

VESUVIUS.

DREAD, desolate Mount! when first I gazed at thee
Lifting thy shadowy cone across the sea,
Thou seemedst a remembered picture drawn
By boyhood's vision in some Southern dawn,
Twin spirit with the purple clouds that rest
In hazy light above thy towering crest.
But when I climbed thy bare and burning side,
And felt the scorching of that fiery tide
Bubbling from thy hot lips, and saw the blight
Of thy dread power spread through the dusky night,

Far down the black slopes to the ocean skiffs, —
When I beheld the drear and savage cliffs
Towering around me black and sulphur-drenched,
The burning cracks whose heat is never quenched,
I knew thou wast that desolating fount
Whose fearful flowing centuries might recount,
Whose fiery surge beat down the marble pride
Of stainless fanes that slept too near thy side,
When fated cities of renownéd fame
Fluttered like moths toward thy devouring flame.

Motionless Victor! Lord of fiery doom!
On thy dark helmet waves thy smoky plume;
Wrapt in thy purple like a Syrian king,
While crouches at thy feet the shrinking Spring,
Thy fallen archangel's throne befits thee, — thou
Who canst not bless, but curse. Thy blasted brow
Scowls with dull eye of hate that nightly broods
On dire events in thy drear solitudes.
Tireless thou burnest on from age to age.
No winter's rains, though yearly they assuage
Thy hot cheeks, where the lava tear-drops run
Down the black furrows, — no joy-giving sun
Of balmy spring clothing thy ruggedness
With colors of all depth and tenderness, —
No clouds of summer smiling on thy sleep, —
No autumn vintage round thy fire-cloven steep, —
Have charmed away the awful mystery
That burns within a heart no eye can see.
In the bright day thou mak'st the blue heavens dun,
Blotting with blasphemous smoke the blessed sun.

No calmest starlit night can still thy curse
Breathed upward through the silent universe.

Last night we saw thee shrouded in a cloak
Of dull gray rain-clouds. From thy crater broke
Swift blazing spasms of flame that glimmered through
The awful gloom of mist whose pallid hue
Half hid thy form, now dark, and flashing now
Like the dread oracles on Sinai's brow.
Prophetic mount! Thou seemedst then to be
Wrapt in a vision of futurity,
Fearfully whispering words of joy or moan,
Whose sense was hidden in thy heart alone.

Nor seer alone of future days o'ercast,
But true historian of the blighted past,
Buried beneath thy feet thou chainest deep
Treasures of beauty in enchanted sleep:
Temples and streets and quaintly painted halls,
Vases and cups for antique festivals,
Fair statues in whose undulating line
The Grecian artist lavished dreams divine;
Altars that burned to gods of mighty name,
Until thy greater sacrificial flame
Swallowed the lesser. Princely art and power
Sank blood-warm to its grave in that dark hour
When thou, wild despot, even to the sea
Whose fevered waves shrank from the fear of thee
Meeting thy fire-kiss, didst send forth thy hosts,
Cloud-myrmidons of death, flooding the coasts
That smiled around thy blue enamelled bay.

Years rolled. The cities in their dungeons lay
Embalmed in lovely death. Long ages crept.
Flowers and luxuriant vines above them slept,
And still not half the wealth beneath that lies
Revisits the sweet light of summer skies.
So thou, stern chronicler, dialest thy dates,
Not by the ephemeral growth and change of states,
But thunderous blasts upheaving from below,
That melt to mist the winter's hoarded snow,
By thy deep beds of fire, thy strata old,
And the slow creep of vegetable mould.

Yet fearful as thou towerest, seen so near,
In thy environment of blight and fear,
Beautiful art thou burning from afar
In liquid fire, — as though a melting star
Had fallen upon thee from the sky profound,
And streamed adown thy sides which, gemmed around,
Sparkle like some dark Abyssinian queen
Robed in her amethyst and ruby sheen.
E'en now I see thee nightly from this bower
Where the red rose and the white orange-flower
Mingle their odors. Looking o'er the sea,
Thy shadowy cone of solemn mystery
Shoots downward in the waves a softened gleam,
Until, by beauty lulled, I can but dream
Of thee as of each gentle lovely thing
That in my path lies daily blossoming.

Christopher Pearse Cranch.

Villa Franca.

VILLA FRANCA.

WAIT a little: do we not wait?
Louis Napoleon is not Fate,
Francis Joseph is not Time;
There 's One hath swifter feet than crime;
Cannon-parliaments settle naught;
Venice is Austria's, — whose is Thought?
Minié is good, but, spite of change,
Gutenberg's gun has the longest range.
Spin, spin, Clotho, spin!
Lachesis, twist! and, Atropos, sever!
In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

Wait, we say: our years are long;
Men are weak, but Man is strong;
Since the stars first curved their rings,
We have looked on many things;
Great wars come and great wars go,
Wolf-tracks light on polar snow;
We shall see him come and gone,
This second-hand Napoleon.
Spin, spin, Clotho, spin!
Lachesis, twist! and, Atropos, sever!

In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

We saw the elder Corsican,
And Clotho muttered as she span,
While crowned lackeys bore the train,
Of the pinchbeck Charlemagne:
"Sister, stint not length of thread!
Sister, stay the scissors dread!
On Saint Helen's granite bleak,
Hark, the vulture whets his beak!"
Spin, spin, Clotho, spin!
Lachesis, twist! and, Atropos, sever!
In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

The Bonapartes, we know their bees
That wade in honey red to the knees;
Their patent reaper, its sheaves sleep sound
In dreamless garners underground:
We know false glory's spendthrift race
Pawning nations for feathers and lace;
It may be short, it may be long,
"'T is reckoning-day!" sneers unpaid Wrong.
Spin, spin, Clotho, spin!
Lachesis, twist! and, Atropos, sever!
In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

The cock that wears the eagle's skin
Can promise what he ne'er could win;

Slavery reaped for fine words sown,
System for all, and rights for none,
Despots atop, a wild clan below,
Such is the Gaul from long ago;
Wash the black from the Ethiop's face,
Wash the past out of man or race!
  Spin, spin, Clotho, spin!
  Lachesis, twist! and, Atropos, sever!
  In the shadow, year out, year in,
  The silent headsman waits forever.

'Neath Gregory's throne a spider swings,
And snares the people for the kings;
"Luther is dead; old quarrels pass;
The stake's black scars are healed with grass";
So dreamers prate; did man ere live
Saw priest or woman yet forgive?
But Luther's broom is left, and eyes
Peep o'er their creeds to where it lies.
  Spin, spin, Clotho, spin!
  Lachesis, twist! and, Atropos, sever!
  In the shadow, year out, year in,
  The silent headsman waits forever.

Smooth sails the ship of either realm,
Kaiser and Jesuit at the helm;
We look down the depths, and mark
Silent workers in the dark
Building slow the sharp-tusked reefs,
Old instincts hardening to new beliefs;

Patience a little; learn to wait;
Hours are long on the clock of Fate.
Spin, spin, Clotho, spin!
Lachesis, twist! and, Atropos, sever!
Darkness is strong, and so is Sin,
But only God endures forever!

James Russell Lowell.

APPENDIX.

Albano, the Lake.

ALBANO.

LO, where emerging from the depths of shade
Of wildly tangling woods that round her rise,
The draperies of Nature unarrayed
In rude magnificence, Albano lies!
Her lake of beauty opening to the skies:
Bosomed in crags, which, darkening mid-air,
Reveal naught but the azure of her eyes,
O'ershadowed by the acacia's golden hair:
A blessing to the eye that lovingly dwells there.

The mirror of Diana! where from high
Reflected, her ethereal face she viewed,
Whose beauty waked, as now, the poet's sigh;
Lo, the rich shadows of her sacred wood,
Where save her starry nymphs none dared intrude!
There, while they sped the chase, she, goddess coy,
Enthronized in her peerless solitude,

Watched in his sleep the unconscious shepherd-boy,
And owned the virgin's love, the deep entrancing joy.

Pure, beautiful beliefs! the heart refining
From sensual and dark idolatries,
To every form of Nature life assigning,
Allying her with our humanities:
When woodland depths were godheads' sanctuaries,
Where the shy Dryad haunts of man could shun;
When the swift shadow shaped on fancy's eyes
The Oread, when, sequestered from the sun,
The Naiad in her lake spread round her waters dun!

John Edmund Reade.

Arcetri.

ARCETRI.

Nearer we hail
Thy sunny slope, Arcetri, sung of old
For its green wine; dearer to me, to most,
As dwelt on by that great Astronomer,
Seven years a prisoner at the city-gate,
Let in but in his grave-clothes. Sacred be
His villa (justly was it called The Gem!)
Sacred the lawn, where many a cypress threw
Its length of shadow, while he watched the stars!
Sacred the vineyard, where, while yet his sight
Glimmered, at blush of morn he dressed his vines,
Chanting aloud in gayety of heart

Some verse of Ariosto! There, unseen,
In manly beauty Milton stood before him,
Gazing with reverent awe, — Milton, his guest,
Just then come forth, all life and enterprise;
He in his old age and extremity,
Blind, at noonday exploring with his staff;
His eyes upturned as to the golden sun,
His eyeballs idly rolling. Little then
Did Galileo think whom he received;
That in his hand he held the hand of one
Who could requite him, who would spread his name
O'er lands and seas, — great as himself, nay, greater;
Milton as little that in him he saw,
As in a glass, what he himself should be,
Destined so soon to fall on evil days
And evil tongues, — so soon, alas, to live
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
And solitude.

Samuel Rogers.

Assisi (Ascesi).

ST. FRANCIS.

BETWEEN Tupino and the stream that falls
Down from the hill elect of blessed Ubald,
A fertile slope of lofty mountain hangs,
From which Perugia feels the cold and heat
Through Porta Sole, and behind it weep
Gualdo and Nocera their grievous yoke.
From out that slope, there where it breaketh most
Its steepness, rose upon the world a sun

As this one does sometimes from out the Ganges;
Therefore let him who speaketh of that place
Say not Ascesi, for he would say little,
But Orient, if he properly would speak.
He was not yet far distant from his rising
Before he had begun to make the earth
Some comfort from his mighty virtue feel.
For he in youth his father's wrath incurred
For certain Dame, to whom, as unto death,
The gate of pleasure no one doth unlock;
And was before his spiritual court
Et coram patre unto her united;
Then day by day more fervently he loved her.
She, reft of her first husband, scorned, obscure,
One thousand and one hundred years and more,
Waited without a suitor till he came.
Naught it availed to hear, that with Amyclas
Found her unmoved at sounding of his voice
He who struck terror into all the world;
Naught it availed being constant and undaunted,
So that, when Mary still remained below,
She mounted up with Christ upon the cross?
But that too darkly I may not proceed,
Francis and Poverty for these two lovers
Take thou henceforward in my speech diffuse.
Their concord and their joyous semblances,
The love, the wonder, and the sweet regard,
They made to be the cause of holy thoughts;
So much so that the venerable Bernard
First bared his feet, and after so great peace
Ran, and, in running, thought himself too slow.
O wealth unknown! O veritable good!

Giles bares his feet, and bares his feet Sylvester
Behind the bridegroom, so doth please the bride!
Then goes his way that father and that master,
He and his Lady and that family
Which now was girding on the humble cord;
Nor cowardice of heart weighed down his brow
At being son of Peter Bernardone,
Nor for appearing marvellously scorned;
But regally his hard determination
To Innocent he opened, and from him
Received the primal seal upon his Order.
After the people mendicant increased
Behind this man, whose admirable life
Better in glory of the heavens were sung,
Incoronated with a second crown
Was through Honorius by the Eternal Spirit
The holy purpose of this Archimandrite.
And when he had, through thirst of martyrdom,
In the proud presence of the Sultan preached
Christ and the others who came after him,
And, finding for conversion too unripe
The folk, and not to tarry there in vain,
Returned to fruit of the Italic grass,
On the rude rock 'twixt Tiber and the Arno
From Christ did he receive the final seal,
Which during two whole years his members bore.
When He, who chose him unto so much good,
Was pleased to draw him up to the reward
That he had merited by being lowly,
Unto his friars, as to the rightful heirs,
His most dear Lady did he recommend,
And bade that they should love her faithfully;

And from her bosom the illustrious soul
Wished to depart, returning to its realm,
And for its body wished no other bier.
Think now what man was he, who was a fit
Companion over the high seas to keep
The bark of Peter to its proper bearings.
And this man was our Patriarch; hence whoever
Doth follow him as he commands can see
That he is laden with good merchandise.
But for new pasturage his flock has grown
So greedy, that it is impossible
They be not scattered over fields diverse;
And in proportion as his sheep remote
And vagabond go farther off from him,
More void of milk return they to the fold.

Dante Alighieri. Tr. H. W. Longfellow.

Baja (*Baiæ*).

BAIÆ.

BUT Baiæ, soft retreat in days of yore,
Recalls our step, and wooes us to its shore.
Heroes and emperors trod this smiling strand,
And art, song, pleasure reigned, a fairy band.
Here Cæsar stooped his pride to garden bowers,
And stern-browed Marius wreathed his sword with flowers;
Here rich Lucullus gorgeous banquets spread,

And Pollio time in chains of roses led:
Steeped in warm bliss seemed ocean, earth, and sky,
Life one rich dream of love and luxury.

Nicholas Michell.

Catania.

CATANIA.

CATANIA! on thy famed and classic shore
I long to plant my foot, and stand between
A paradise, all blooming, gay, and green,
And thy earth-circled ocean's gentle roar,
Along whose peaceful waves the sunbeams pour,
From stainless skies, deep amber, and imbue
The ruffled waters with an iris hue,
Like torchlight sparkling in a vault of ore, —
And turning I behold thy fields of grain
Waving in yellow floods o'er vale and plain,
And meadows mantled in a waste of flowers,
And hills whereon the golden orange glows,
And purpling with the ripe vine's nectared bowers,
And breathing with the myrtle and the rose;
And higher still, flame-crested Etna towering,
A belt of giant oak and chestnut waves
In gloomy verdure, like the cypress louring
With shade of solemn night o'er Eastern graves;
And loftier, in its virgin robe of white,
The snow-cap, pillowed on the cloudless sky,
Seems like a floating column of pure light,
And round its pointed cone dark volumes lie

Rolled from the volcan's jaws, and sheets of flame
Dart on their path to Heaven, and flowing o'er
The glowing torrent rolls its flashing stream,
And from the mountain's womb comes forth a sullen roar.

James Gates Percival.

Cuma (Cumæ).

CUMÆ.

THOU breeze! why bear the violet's rich perfume?
Ye birds! why soar and sing on wanton plume?
Through the long grass why flow, ye crystal streams?
And why, thou sun! pour down thy gladdening beams?
Cimmerian darkness here its cloud should spread,
And silence claim this City of the Dead.
Cumæ! that lives in Virgil's matchless lay,
Mother of states ere Rome commenced her sway!
Who braved Etruria's might, and dared the power
Of Afric's chief in Carthage' proudest hour;
Where are her busy forums, merchant-fleets,
Her mustering armies, and her crowded streets?
Where her bronzed shrine that gleamed along the wave,
And, more than all, her Sibyl's mystic cave?
Pride of Campania! daughter of the sea!
Gone is her wealth, and bowed her majesty;
Where once her palace shone, her towers arose,
Turf wraps the soil, a shadowy forest grows!
There, blent with weeds, the wild-flower wastes its breath,
And beasts and reptiles halve the spot with Death.

Nicholas Michell.

Etna, the Mountain.

ETNA.

THROUGH the black, rushing smoke-bursts
Thick breaks the red flame;
All Etna heaves fiercely
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo!
Are haunts meet for thee.
But where Helicon breaks down
In cliff to the sea,

Where the moon-silvered inlets
Send far their light voice
Up the still vale of Thisbe,
O, speed, and rejoice!

On the sward at the cliff-top
Lie strewn the white flocks;
On the cliff-side the pigeons
Roost deep in the rocks;

In the moonlight the shepherds,
Soft lulled by the rills,
Lie wrapt in their blankets,
Asleep on the hills.

What forms are these coming
So white through the gloom?

What garments out-glistening
The gold-flowered broom?

What sweet-breathing presence
Outperfumes the thyme?
What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime?

'T is Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine.
The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows!
They stream up again!
What seeks on this mountain
The glorified train?

They bathe on this mountain,
In the spring by their road;
Then on to Olympus,
Their endless abode!

Whose praise do they mention?
Of what is it told?
What will be forever;
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father
Of all things; and then
The rest of immortals,
The action of men.

The day in his hotness,
The strife with the palm;
The night in his silence,
The stars in their calm.

Matthew Arnold.

Frascati.

AT THE VILLA CONTI.

WHAT peace and quiet in this villa sleep!
Here let us pause, nor chase for pleasure on;
Nothing can be more exquisite than this, —
Work, for the nonce farewell, — this day we 'll give
To fallow joys of perfect idleness.

See how the old house lifts its face of light
Against the pallid olives that behind
Throng up the hill. Look down this vista's shade
Of dark square shaven ilexes, where spurts
The fountain's thin white thread, and blows away.
And mark! along the terraced balustrade
Two contadine stopping in the shade,
With copper vases poised upon their heads,
How their red jackets tell against the green!

Old, all is old, — what charm there is in age!
Do you believe this villa when 't was new
Was half so beautiful as now it seems?
Look at these balustrades of travertine,

Had they the charm when fresh and sharply carved
As now that they are stained and grayed with time
And mossed with lichens, every grim old mask
That grins upon their pillars bearded o'er
With waving sprays of slender maiden-hair?
Ah no! I cannot think it. Things of art
Snatch nature's graces from the hand of Time.
Here will we sit and let the sleeping noon
Doze on and dream into the afternoon,
While all the mountains shake in opal light,
Forever shifting, till the sun's last glance
Transfigures with its splendor all our world.

Hark! the cicala crackles mid the trees,
How shrilly! and the toppling fountain spills
The music of its silvery rain, how soft!
Into the broad clear basin, — zigzag darts
The sudden dragon-fly across, or hangs
Poised in the sun with shimmer of glazed wings.

And there the exquisite campagna lies
Dreaming what dreams of olden pomp and war,
Of love and pain and joy that it has known!
Sadder, perhaps, but dearer than of yore,
With wild-flowers overstrewn, like some loved grave;
Its silent stretches haunted by vast trains
Of ghostly shapes, where stalks majestical,
Mid visionary pomp of vanished days,
The buried grandeur of imperial Rome;
Moaned over by great winds that from the sea
Sweep inland, and by wandering clouds of tears;

How it lies throbbing there beneath the sun,
So silent with its ruins on its breast!
There, far Soracte on the horizon piles
Its lonely peak, and gazes on the sea;
There Leonessa couches in repose,
And stern Gennaro rears its purple ridge,
And wears its ermine late into the spring.
When all beneath is one vast lush of flowers,
And poppies paint whole acres with one sweep
Of their rich scarlet, and entangling vines
Shroud the low walls, and drop from arch to arch
Of the far-running lessening aqueducts,
On his broad shoulders still the imperial robe
Of winter hangs, and leashed within his caves
The violent Tramontana lies in wait.

* * *

Hark! from the ilexes the nightingale
Begins its beating prelude, like the throbs
Of some quick heart, then pauses, then again
Bursts into fitful jets of gurgling song,
Then beats again; and listen! rising now
To its full rapture thrills the shadowy wood
With the delirious passion of its voice;
With dizzy trills, and low, deep, tearful notes,
And hurried heaping of voluptuous tones
That, blent together in one intricate maze
Of sweet inextricable melodies,
Whirl on and up, and circling lift and lift,
And burst at last in scattered showers of notes,
And leave us the sweet, silent afternoon.

William Wetmore Story.

Mattinata (*Mons Matinus*).

ARCHYTAS.

THEE, too, the mapper-out of seas and lands,
The teller, bent unnumbered sands to count,
A scanty heap of dust from pious hands,
Archytas, holds beneath Matinus' Mount.
What profits it the heavens to explore,
To range from pole to pole, and then to die?
So Tantalus, the guest of Gods no more,
So died Tithonus, wafted to the sky,
And Minos, councillor of Supreme Jove.
Twice to the shades Panthoïdes returned,
Calling the witness of a shield to prove
His fame, in Troy's defence so dearly earned.
He, as thou know'st, well skilled in Nature's lore,
Cast but the husks and shell of humankind;
But death to us is blackness evermore,
None can retrace the path by fate assigned.
The Furies offer some to cruel Mars,
Others, seafaring men, the waves o'erwhelm,
Old men and striplings crowd the funeral cars,
No head escapes from harsh Proserpine's realm.
Me, too, rough Notus drowned in Hadria's tide
What time Orion sheathed his sloping brand,
O sailor-man, these bones, this skull to hide
Grudge not a handful of the drifting sand;

So may the East-wind on Venusia blow
And spare thee on the waters far away.
Just guerdon for thy care may Jove bestow,
And Neptune, guardian of Tarentum's bay.
But if thou turn a deaf ear to my prayer
Surely thy children's fortune shall be wrecked,
And thou, for lack of charity, shalt bear
The just requital of a like neglect.
No expiation shall undo the wrong,
No lustral waters purify thy heart;
The boon I ask will not delay thee long,
Three handfuls of gray dust, and then depart.

Horace. Tr. R. M. Hovenden.

Pæstum.

PÆSTUM.

LO, far on the horizon's verge reclined
A temple, reared as on a broken throne:
The sun's red rays in lurid light declined
O'er clouds that mutter forth a thunder-tone,
Gleam athwart each aerial column shown
Like giants standing on a sable sky;
What record tells it in that desert lone?
Resting in solitary majesty
Eternal Pæstum there absorbs the heart and eye.

Pause here, the desolate waste, the lowering heaven,
The sea-fowl's clang, the gray mist hurrying by,
The altar fronting ye with brow unriven,
In isolation of sublimity,
Mates with the clouds, the mountains, and the sky:
But the sea breaks no more against his shrine,
Hurled from his base the ocean-deity;
His worshippers have passed and left no sign,
The Shaker of the Earth no more is held divine!

There like some Titan throned in his retreat
Of deserts, the declining sun's last rays
Falling round him on his majestic seat,
Each limb dilated in the twilight haze
Of the red distance darkening on the gaze:
An image whose august tranquillity
The presence of unconscious power betrays,
Whose co-mates are the hills, the rocks, the sea,
Even so the awestruck soul reposing dwells on thee!

And there thou standest stern, austere, sublime,
Strength nakedly resposing at thy base,
Making a mockery of the assaults of time;
Earthquakes have heaved, storms shook, the lightning's trace
Left the black shadows time shall not efface,
And the hot levin dinted where it fell!
But on thy unperturbed and steadfast face
Is stamped the impress of the unchangeable,
That fixed forever there thy massive form shall dwell.

Spirit of gray Antiquity! enthroned
With solitude and silence here, proclaim
Thou, brooding o'er thy altar-place, who owned,
Who reared, that mightiest temple? from whence came
The children of the sea? what age, what name,
Bore they who chose this plain their home to be?
Arena meted for the race of fame:
For gods to applaud the deeds of liberty,
Knowledge, and glorious art, that flows but from the free.

John Edmund Reade.

Posilipo.

POSILIPO.

MUSING and slow, we pass Averno's tide,
Hell's entrance feigned, where phantoms wail and glide;
But fairer scenes are near, — we climb yon hill,
Where Taste at Nature's charms might drink her fill, —
Posilipo, o'erlooking shore and sea,
And Love's own city, bright Parthenope.
Glorious that landscape spreads around, below,
In hues of heaven all earth appears to glow;
Through vales of flowers the wild bee blithely wings,
Mid orange-groves the soft-plumed mavis sings.
Kissing the shores, and stretching far away,

One sheet of sapphire spreads the isle-gemmed bay.
Vines clad the mountains, myrtles fringe the wave,
And harp-like music whispers from each cave:
The very winds seem born of joy and love,
And earth laughs up to laughing skies above.
O lovely land! when banished angels flew
From Eden's bowers, and bade our world adieu,
The heavenly strangers dropped their parting tear,
And stamped their smiles, and left their footprints here!

Yet 't is not Nature's beauties, glowing round,
Lend the chief charm to this enchanted ground,
But brilliant memories of long-vanished years,
The priceless lore which hallows and endears.
Each ruin tells a tale; rock, grove, and stream,
The classic haunt of some bright spirit seem.
What rises near? — a fabric lone and gray,
That boasts no pillars rich, no friezes gay;
An ilex bends above its moss-clad walls,
In long festoons the dark green ivy falls,
And pale-eyed flowers, like watching vestals, bloom, —
Kneel, stranger, kneel! that cell is Virgil's tomb!
Ay, doubt not, though thou find'st nor urn nor bust,
That slumbers there the immortal poet's dust;
Gaze on his laurelled brow with Fancy's eye,
And hear his harp amid the ruins sigh.

Nicholas Michell.

Siena.

THE VILLA.

LET me go back to when I saw you last.
Our lives till then had close together lain,
Shaped each to each in habit, feeling, thought,
Like almonds twinned within a single shell.
What thought or hope was mine that was not yours?
What joy was mine that was not shared with you?
All was so innocent when we were girls;
Our little walks, — the days you spent with me
In the old villa, — where, with arms loose clasped
Around each other's waists, we roamed along
Among the giant orange-pots that stood
At every angle of our garden-plot,
And told our secrets, while the fountain plashed,
And, waving in the breeze, its veil of mist
Swept o'er our faces. Think of those long hours
We in the arched and open loggia sat
Pricking the bright flowers on our broidery frames,
And as we chatted, lifting oft our eyes,
We gazed at Amiata's purple height,
Trembling behind its opal veil of air;
Or on the nearer slopes through the green lanes,
Fenced either side with rich and running vines,
Watched the white oxen trail their basket-carts,
Or contadine with wide-flapping hats
Singing amid the olives, whose old trunks

Stood knee-deep in the golden fields of grain.
Do you remember the red poppies, too,
That glowed amid the tender green of spring, —
The purple larkspur that assumed their place
Mid the sheared stubble of the autumn fields, —
The ilex walk, — the acacia's fingered twigs, —
The rose-hued oleanders peeping o'er
The terraced wall, — the slanting wall that propped
Our garden, from whose clefts the caper plants
Spirted their leaves and burst in plumy flowers?
All these are still the same, they do not miss
The eye that loved them so; and yet how oft
I wonder if those old magnolia-trees
Still feed the air with their great creamy flowers,
And show the wind their rusted under-leaf.
I wonder if that trumpet-flower is dead.
O heaven! they all should be, I loved them so;
Some one has killed them, if they have not died.

But you can see the villa any day,
And I am wearying you. Yet all these things
Are beads upon the rosary of youth,
And just to say their names recalls those hours
So full of joy, — each bead is like a prayer.
How many an hour I 've sat and dreamed of them!
And dear Siena, with its Campo tower
That seems to fall against the trooping clouds,
And the great Duomo with its pavement rich,
Till sick at heart I felt that I must die.
People are kneeling there upon it now,
But I shall never kneel there any more;

And bells ring out on happy festivals,
And all the pious people flock to mass,
But I shall never go there any more.
How all these little things come back to me
That I shall never see, — no, nevermore!
O, kiss the pavement, dear, when you go back!
Whisper a prayer for me where once I knelt,
And tell the dead stones how I love them still.

William Wetmore Story.

JULY IN SIENA.

FOR July, in Siena, by the willow-tree,
I give you barrels of white Tuscan wine
In ice far down your cellars stored supine;
And morn and eve to eat in company
Of those vast jellies dear to you and me;
Of partridges and youngling pheasants sweet,
Boiled capons, sovereign kids: and let their treat
Be veal and garlic, with whom these agree.
Let time slip by, till by and by, all day;
And never swelter through the heat at all,
But move at ease at home, sound, cool, and gay;
And wear sweet-colored robes that lightly fall;
And keep your tables set in fresh array,
Not coaxing spleen to be your seneschal.

Folgore da San Geminiano. Tr. D. G. Rossetti.

Tortona.

TORTONA.

A HEAP of ashes now
Crowneth the hill where once Tortona stood;
And, drunken with her blood and with her wine,
Fallen there amidst her spoil upon the dead
Slept the wild beasts of Germany: like ghosts
Dim wandering through the darkness of the night,
Those that were left by famine and the sword
Hidden within the heart of thy dim caverns,
Desolate city! rose and turned their steps
Noiselessly towards compassionate Milan.
Thither they bore their swords and hopes! I see
A thousand heroes born from the example
Tortona gave. O city, if I could,
O sacred city! upon thy ruins fall
Reverently, and take them in mine arms,
The relics of thy brave I'd gather up
In precious urns, and from the altars here
In days of battle offer to be kissed.

Giovanni Battista Niccolini. Tr. W. D. Howells.

Towns of Italy.

CITTÀ D' ITALIA.

THE following lines of some unknown author, descriptive of Italian towns, are taken from James Howell's "Signorie of Venice," 1651. The orthography has been modernized.

FAMA tra noi; Roma pomposa e santa;
Venezia ricca, saggia, signorile;
Napoli odorifera e gentile;
Fiorenza bella tutto il mondo canta;
Grande Milano in Italia si vanta;
Bologna grassa, e Ferrara civile;
Padova dotta, e Bergamo sottile;
Genova di superbia altiera pianta;
Verona degna, e Perugia sanguigna;
Brescia l'armata, e Mantova gloriosa;
Rimini buona, e Pistoja ferrigna;
Cremona antica, e Lucca industriosa;
Furlì bizzarro, e Ravenna benigna;
E Sinigaglia dell' aria nojosa;
E Capua l' amorosa;
Pisa frendente, e Pesaro giardino;
Ancona bel porto al pellegrino;
Fedelissimo Urbino;
Ascoli tondo, e lungo Recanate;
Foligno delle strade inzuccherate,
E par dal cielo mandate
Le belle donne di Fano si dice;
Ma Siena poi tra l' altre più felice.

Varignano.

GARIBALDI.

FLY, O my songs, to Varignano fly!
Like some lost flock of swallows homeward flying,
And hail me Rome's Dictator, who there doth lie
Broken with wounds, but conquered not, nor dying;
Bid him think on the April that is nigh,
Month of the flowers and ventures fear-defying.

Or if it is not nigh, it soon shall come,
As shall the swallow to his last year's home,
As on its naked stem the rose shall burn,
As to the empty sky the stars return,
As hope comes back to hearts crushed by regret;
Nay, say not this to his heart ne'er crushed yet!

Francesco dall' Ongaro. Tr. W. D. Howells.

Verona.

TO VERONA.

VERONA! thy tall gardens stand erect
Beckoning me upward. Let me rest awhile
Where the birds whistle hidden in the boughs,
Or fly away when idlers take their place,
Mated as well, concealed as willingly;
Idlers whose nest must not swing there, but rise

Beneath a gleamy canopy of gold,
Amid the flight of Cupids, and the smiles
Of Venus ever radiant o'er their couch.
Here would I stay, here wander, slumber here,
Nor pass into that theatre below
Crowded with their faint memories, shades of joy.
But ancient song arouses me; I hear
Coelius and Anfilena; I behold
Lesbia, and Lesbia's linnet at her lip
Pecking the fruit that ripens and swells out
For him whose song the Graces loved the most,
Whatever land, east, west, they visited.
Even he must not detain me: one there is
Greater than he, of broader wing, of swoop
Sublimer. Open now that humid arch
Where Juliet sleeps the quiet sleep of death,
And Romeo sinks aside her.

Fare ye well,
Lovers! Ye have not loved in vain: the hearts
Of millions throb around ye. This lone tomb
One greater than yon walls have ever seen,
Greater than Manto's prophet eye foresaw
In her own child or Rome's, hath hallowed;
And the last sod or stone a pilgrim knee
Shall press (Love swears it, and swears true) is here.

Walter Savage Landor.

THE END.

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